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THE CHILD AND THE WORLD

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THE CHILD AND THE WORLD

Dialogues in Modern Education

BY

MARGARET NAUMBURG

Founder of the Walden School

New York

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To

ELIZABETH E. FARRELL

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The Walden School was founded in 1914 by Margaret Naumburg, as the Children's School. Three years later it was established under its present title, in its present quarters at 34 West 68th Street, New York. It was begun with the purpose of developing a new type of educational experiment. Originating with a nursery group and expanding gradually, year by year, it has now completed a high school of its own. The school consists of about two hundred boys and girls divided into thirteen groups ranging from two years to college age. The year 1928 marks the fulfillment of this plan.

From 1914 to 1922 Margaret Naumburg organized and directed the Walden School. In 1922 she withdrew from this position. Margaret Pollitzer and C. Elizabeth Goldsmith, long associated with her, then became the executive Directors, and Margaret Naumburg the advisory Director of the school.

If my view of the function of philosophy is correct, it is the most effective of the intellectual pursuits. It builds cathedrals before the workmen have moved a stone, and it destroys them before the elements have worn down the arches. It is the architect of the buildings of the spirit and it is also their solvent—and the spiritual precedes the material. Philosophy works slowly. Thoughts lie dormant for ages; and then, almost suddenly as it were, mankind finds that they have embodied themselves in institutions.

A. N. Whitehead

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What Do We Want from Education?

In America, community interests and social movements are a powerful element in our daily lives. Since we think and live less deeply in terms of the individual, we naturally deal more directly in terms of mass education. We have had our periods of being excessively proud of our system of Public Education. Now, we boast at times of the great good that our vast educational and scientific foundations must accomplish. Not long ago, an English writer, reviewing a group of English and American books on modern education, suggested that our present overconcern with this problem was not so much a cause for pride as for shame, that a disproportionate amount of human attention was now being devoted to the patching up of a maladjusted civilization through its schools. Our nervous and problem children and their problem parents were a product, he continued, of a social system that did not work.[1] Such a suggestion may well be a cause of shock and recoil in all of us who still place our chief hope in the promise of education. But the effect of such criticism can only be tonic if it should lead us to reconsider the present values of our social order. Values that we in America have long believed unquestionable.

In line with what was best in the old American tradition, our first phase of progressive education led to the socialization of the school and a reorganization of its mediaeval curriculum. Through Francis Parker and John Dewey our schools were freed from the barren ideals of a monastic discipline. For the first time they were brought

[1] Langdon Davies. "Stop Educating Our Children," in *New York Herald Tribune*, April 3, 1927.

close to the everyday life and genuine concerns of children. Then came the unification of school subjects around centers of interest in the social milieu. We tend already to forget that all these ideas, which scarcely more than a generation ago were regarded as revolutionary by those in control of education, are now quite acceptable to the right as well as to the left wing.

But however disinterested and genuine the idealism that motivated these original efforts may have been, there has, since then, been a curious distortion and modification of them in practice. From being an attempt to orient children to the life of their own community, it has gradually been transformed into an effort to train children into a realization of their social responsibilities for citizenship. The theory was that this was a political democracy, and that every boy or girl must be trained to vote intelligently. It was not long before this ideal was transformed into the extreme dogmas of an "Americanization program." What has since happened in our democratic country as it coasted more and more dangerously towards empire has been succinctly stated by Professor James Harvey Robinson:

> Now education for citizenship would seem to consist in gaining a knowledge of the actual workings of our social organization, with some illuminating notions of its origin, together with a full realization of its defects and their apparent sources. But here we encounter an obstacle that is unimportant in the older type of education but which may prove altogether fatal to any good results in our efforts to make better citizens. Subjects of instruction like reading and writing, mathematics, Latin and Greek, chemistry and physics, medicine, and the law are fairly well standardized and retrospective. Political and social questions, on the other hand, and matters relating to prevailing business methods, race animosities, public elections and governmental policy are, if they are vital, necessarily "controversial." School

boards and superintendents, trustees and presidents of colleges and universities, are sensitive to this fact. They eagerly deprecate in their public manifestoes any suspicion that pupils and students are being awakened in any way to the truth that our institutions can possibly be fundamentally defective, or that the present generation of citizens has not conducted our affairs with exemplary success, guided by the immutable principles of justice.

How indeed can a teacher be expected to explain to the sons and daughters of business men, politicians, doctors, lawyers, and clergymen—all pledged to the maintenance of the sources of their livelihood—the actual nature of business enterprise as now practiced, the prevailing methods of legislative bodies and courts and the conduct of foreign affairs? Think of a teacher in the public schools recounting the more illuminating facts about municipal government under which he lives, with due attention to graft and jobs! So, courses in government, political economy, sociology and ethics confine themselves to inoffensive generalizations, harmless details of organization and the commonplaces of routine morality, for only in that way can they escape being controversial. Teachers are rarely able or inclined to explain our social life and its presuppositions with sufficient insight and honesty to produce any very important results.

However we may feel on this important matter, we must all agree that the aim of education for citizenship as now conceived is a preparation for the same old citizenship which has so far failed to eliminate the shocking hazards and crying injustices of our social and political life. For we sedulously inculcate in the coming generation exactly the same illusions and the same ill-placed confidence in existing institutions and prevailing notions that have brought the world to the pass in which we find it. Since we do all we can to corroborate the beneficence of what we have, we can hardly hope to raise up a more intelligent generation bent on achieving what we have not.[1]

Here Robinson voices the disillusion and dissatisfaction of a large number of parents of the rising generation.

[1] James Harvey Robinson, *The Mind in the Making*, pp. 20-23.

Signs are not wanting, these days, of a loss of faith in our brassy American slogans about "social service" and "civic reform." And there is evident a growing need for spiritual renewal in some creative expression of personalized values.

For the few among us who are as yet able to articulate this change, there exist thousands who grow uneasy beneath the stereotyped and commercial idealism of Rotarian America.

Some interesting expressions of this tendency are already available in the popular reading lists given out by our public libraries. A similar swing of the pendulum away from economic and social reform, toward philosophy, psychology and all that concerns the arts and general culture of America, is clearly registered by the students of one of our well-known schools for social research; courses in politics and sociology are even there no longer in demand. The problem of individual values grows apace, as the glamour of social service and community welfare dims.

America, as I already suggested, has recognized nothing but the virtues of the social approach. But there is another face to the coin. An exaggeration of the social ideal may lead to the extinction of individuality. To the European or the Asiatic, our ideals of herd conformity are often incomprehensible. But there is in our midst this growing minority which has come to question the perfection of our social standardization. The implications of our social philosophy are what Mr. Joseph Wood Krutch calls our animal rather than our human ideals. Of this he writes:

> But when a man looks at an ant he realizes the meaning of humanity. If he happens to be one of those whose thought has

concerned itself much with sociology he may be struck by the fact that the ant hill represents something very close to that communistic Utopia generally evolved by the imagination which busies itself with picturing an ideal society, and yet the contemplation of this realized and eternal perfection strikes a chill to his heart, because it seems to have no meaning or value and because he perceives that, so far as he is concerned, nature's masterpiece might be destroyed without causing him to feel that anything valuable had passed away.

This perfected society is, that is to say, utterly devoid of human values, and its perfection is made possible by that very fact. It owes both its stability and its efficient harmony to the absence of any tendency on the part of individuals either to question the value of existence or to demand anything for themselves.[1]

The suggested conclusion, that in serving society we may not necessarily be subserving our individual development, is so contrary to our conventional way of thinking, and to what usually passes as American idealism, that it seems important to add other evidence to this viewpoint. One of our keenest and most recent French critics, M. André Siegfried, goes so far as to state that our mechanized civilization of social conformity, despite its fabulous material rewards, may demand too great a sacrifice of individual values for Europe to pay our price:

The chief contrast between Europe and America is not so much one of geography, as a fundamental difference between two epochs in the history of mankind, each with its own conception of life. We have the contrast between industrial mass production, which absorbs the individual for its material conquests, as against the individual considered not merely as a means of production and progress, but as an independent ego. From this unusual aspect we perceive certain traits that are common to the psychology of both

[1] Joseph Wood Krutch, "The Paradox of Humanism," in *The Atlantic Monthly*, December, 1927, p. 764.

Europe and the Orient. So the discussion broadens until it becomes a dialogue, as it were, between Ford and Ghandi.[1]

However reluctant we may be to do so, M. Siegfried here forces us to question ourselves. Where, then, at best, can our present civilization lead us? Increased organization and increased production, we are told, advance prosperity, enlarge our leisure, and increase our freedom. Leisure for what? And freedom for what? It is fair to ask. Does America want more money and more time for more jazz, more radios, and more automobiles? By the expression on the face of the average citizen who knows these delights, American comfort may not be worth its price.

Some years ago William James, in his *Talks to Teachers*, gave the comments of

a number of accomplished Hindoo visitors at Cambridge, who talked freely of life and philosophy. More than one of them has confided to me that the sight of our faces, all contracted as they are with the habitual American over-intensity and anxiety of expression, and our ungraceful and distorted attitudes when sitting, made on him a very painful impression. "I do not see," said one, "how it is possible for you to live as you do, without a single minute in your day deliberately given to tranquillity and meditation. It is an invariable part of our Hindoo life to retire for at least half an hour daily into silence, to relax our muscles, govern our breathing, and meditate on eternal things. Every Hindoo child is trained to this at an early age." The good fruits of such a discipline were obvious in the physical repose and lack of tension, and the wonderful smoothness and calmness of facial expression and imperturbability of manner of these Orientals. I felt that my countrymen were depriving themselves of an essential grace of character.[2]

[1] André Siegfried, *America Comes of Age*, p. 353.
[2] William James, *Talks to Teachers*, p. 74.

Deeper perhaps than "grace of character" lies the difference between the poise of the Hindoo and the nervous tension of the American. Two bodies juxtaposed as symbols of two states of being. In the words of a cultivated Indian who has lived long in America, "What remains as the most conspicuous character of the Indian culture, and its greatest significance for the modern world, is the evidence of a constant effort to understand the meaning and the ultimate purpose of life, and a purposive organization of society in harmony with that order and with a view to the attainment of that purpose." [1]

The most hopeful, as well as the most depressing thing about education, is the rapidity with which malleable human beings respond to whatever training they happen to be exposed. In spite of the monotonous uniformity of our average American, we are still producing annual crops of extraordinarily differentiated human infants. Would it then seem an impossible task for us to hope to transform this powerful tide of industrialism? Japan, we know, was changed in little more than a generation from an eastern to a western empire. The center of gravity today undoubtedly rests with industrial control. To go against this force would not be easy. But the protest of an intelligent and growing minority against the compulsive uniformity of American life is perhaps stronger than foreign critics could possibly estimate. If this voice gathers power, if its momentum grows, might we not see a shift of the center of gravity, a transformation of the American scene? A minority party, then, that chose to protect the values of the individual rather than those of the herd.

In the past we have produced spirited and outstanding individuals, men like Thoreau and Bronson Alcott and

[1] Ananda Coomaraswamy, *The Dance of Siva*, p. 2.

Henry Adams, who, at the cost of unpopularity, isolation, or ostracism, were able to stand alone against the currents of herd conformity. We have had them in the past. May we not achieve them again in the future?

Parts of the fourth and fourteenth of these dialogues appeared in *The Survey* and are reproduced here by courtesy of that publication.

THE CHILD AND THE WORLD

First Dialogue

A School Superintendent from a Midwestern Public School and the Director

Public School Superintendent. I think I ought to explain how I come to be here. I'm here at the urgent request of our Teachers' Union. They want me to make a survey of these modern schools. They have an idea that it may help them persuade our local Board of Education to permit the reorganization of an elementary school on similar lines. They ferreted me out for this trip, appealing to me as the only superintendent who had been sympathetic to their efforts to change our inflexible school system. Other superintendents looked on me as a dangerous innovator, just because I permitted a couple of teachers to experiment with some of these new methods of teaching the three R's.

I must confess to you that I am rapidly becoming more and more uncomfortable in the anomalous position I occupy in the system. When I was young it seemed simple enough to organize and direct the administration of our public schools. Their efficiency once justified their being. As the years went by, the creak of the machinery grew louder, until I can now see that it kills the spirit of our best teachers and presses the life out of our keenest children. But why am I saying such things to you? You were a stranger until I spoke to you for the first time in

this office five minutes ago! Yet to you I've expressed thoughts that I've hidden from my closest colleagues.

Director. It may be that you can raise these questions more freely to me just because I am completely outside of your own personal circle. I quite understand the mood in which you spoke. And rest assured I shall respect your confidence.

Supt. Thank you. Then I'm going to go ahead to say what else is on my mind. During the past year I have been asking myself a number of questions, without finding satisfactory answers.

Dir. I hope you feel free now to tell me just what they are.

Supt. For instance: with one's confidence in the old school régime tottering, what effective position can one maintain within the present system? Until more is known about the new methods of teaching, have we any right to risk educational experiments on defenseless children? An experiment might do them irreparable harm. Don't you admit that?

Dir. Did you ever try to estimate the terrible injuries that are being inflicted on children every day and every hour in the name of orthodox education in the majority of our American schools?

Supt. Would you really use such strong language to describe the effects of formal education, even at its worst, on our pupils?

Dir. I would use a stronger term, if I knew it. The constriction, repression, and misdirection of the original power and spontaneous energy of thousands of school children is something I am prepared to denounce as a menacing evil of orthodox education.

Supt. I must, for the moment, ignore your strictures on formal education, since I am more concerned with follow-

ing the sequence of your thought on the possibilities of the new schools. But tell me, won't you admit that the disadvantages of formal schooling are on the whole more than counterbalanced by the greater risks of the new experimental methods?

Dir. But you tell me you have never seen any of these modern schools in action. That forces us to keep our discussion for the time being in the realm of theory. As soon as you have visited this school, we can go practically into the question you have raised. As to my views of the risks of the new methods of education, all I have to say is this: Either we shall go on repeating outworn methods on worn-out children, or we shall discover new methods of preserving the vitality with which every fresh crop of children enters school life each season.

In spite of your objections, I even suspect you of nursing a secret hope that I may yet be able to overcome your doubts.

Supt. (*smiling*). Maybe so.

Dir. That argument against risk is the defense against every proposal of all those in control. It's just the same with those who wish to maintain the status quo in the arts, government, or education. All of them are fearful of what is new or different, fearful of losing their immediate power. While only a fraction of the human race pretends to know what is what in art, or philosophy, or science, no one is so poor he cannot afford his own opinion about education. Has it ever struck you how that comes about?

Supt. No.

Dir. Well, nowadays, we've all been through something —called education. And most of us are pretty well satisfied with ourselves. And if any one begins to criticize the system of education under which *we* were brought up, an

inadequacy is implied in ourselves, as the products of the system. And most of us are quick to take offense at the slight. "What was good enough for me is good enough for my children" is implicit in the usual resistance to any change in our present system of education.

Supt. I believe you are right.

Dir. I imagine that is why people become so hot when they discuss education, and are apt to oppose the most reasonable suggestions for its improvement.

Supt. That's true. You've given me a tip there that I must apply to myself as well as to others.

Dir. Do you believe that I, or the growing number of men and women who are applying themselves to the new education, would be spending our best efforts in such a way, if we felt that the risks to the children were greater than the advantages to be gained?

Supt. No, of course not. But I've lived so persistently in the atmosphere of formal methods that I've never come face to face with any one before who vouched for these new methods of school organization whole-heartedly.

Dir. You will probably have less sense of strangeness about me or those you may soon meet in other new schools if I explain that most of us came to our present attitude gradually and reluctantly, and through experiences not very different from your own. At some time or other in our professional work, we began to be aware of what you just called the creaking of school machinery. I might sum up our general line of reasoning in some such way as this. If a factory fails to make serviceable shoes, we all of us know how to get better ones made. Well, a certain number of educators found themselves so placed in the present school system. They were dissatisfied with its product. But finding no better brands on the market, they were

forced to create fresh varieties of education among themselves. Education was more obviously stereotyped than shoes, and there were just a few of us who believed its imperfections so evident that they were remediable.

Supt. It's true that our original brand of education has deteriorated. It's not what it was. But to get back to the possible risks of these new experiments. I wish you could show me how they can be minimized. I'd be much relieved. For I've been frank with you about my position. And I would certainly be pleased if you could convince me that changes might be safely made immediately, within our school system.

Dir. First, what are the risks? Suppose you assume for the moment that you are not a public school superintendent, or bound to any school system at all. You come here to look at this school from the standpoint of simple human interest. What then would first attract your attention in the atmosphere or appearance of such a school as this?

Supt. I was impressed by the fact that these buildings lack the formality and coldness of a regular school environment.

Dir. Yes. We mean to have this a place of warmth and personal friendliness. It is framed in bright curtains and enlivened by gayly painted furniture, in contrast, as you remarked, to the usual somber school environment. Here, where children spend three-quarters of their time, in childhood as well as in youth, there should be the intimacy and beauty of a home. So, as you shall soon see, there are no heavy yellow oak desks nor thick school benches nailed to the floors of our classrooms.

Supt. And why not?

Dir. We use our rooms for many activities besides formal studies. Each child has his individual table and chair

to use when he needs it. The furniture, while sturdy enough for serious use, is light in structure, so that the youngest children may move it back and forth.

Supt. And is it necessary then to shift school furniture about so very often?

Dir. Oh, yes. Particularly in those younger groups who make and do so many things besides required school subjects, right in their own classrooms. In older groups, where the activities and work on definite problems become more specialized, there are shops, studios, and laboratories for carpentry, printing, metal work, science, and all the arts.

Supt. Give me an example of how such a young group might go to work.

Dir. When we go upstairs, you will see plenty of older boys and girls, as well as nursery and kindergarten children, at work in ways that adults are apt to dismiss as "mere play." We may happen to see a group of six-year-old children spread across a floor that has been cleared of its furniture. Perhaps they will be laying out an elaborate scheme of railroad tracks, stations, signal system, and printed signs. In the background stands the teacher, keenly aware of all that is taking place. She is not that familiar figure we all know so well, not the old-fashioned teacher who with sharp glance and determined soothing tone, controls and dominates a pack of meek and silent children. No, the new teacher plays her rôle in another key. Her purpose is to encourage and understand the children and to discover effective means of stimulating and advancing the practical efforts of her class. A modern teacher, conscious of her position of power, tries to use it purposively to encourage and not to intimidate her group.

Supt. The pupils, then, rather than the teacher, occupy the center of the stage?

Dir. They should to a greater extent than was possible formerly in the old style of school.

But to return for a moment to that teacher and the group of children building a railroad on the floor. There was just one point I wanted to bring to your attention. The teacher in a new school would make use of the natural interest and activity of her class, say, in mapping out railroads, to discover just what each child had personally observed and discovered about trains, steam engines, signals, and everything else that was being used in the play. Furthermore, if she found some youngsters struggling to make station signs, she might seize such a moment to direct their interest to the intriguing possibilities of word games. In some such way she might begin to draw her children toward the foundations of reading.

Supt. When it comes to the teaching of such subjects as reading and arithmetic, you reverse, then, the usual school procedure?

Dir. In what sense do you mean?

Supt. You don't teach your children these subjects in order that they may do things later. At first you get them to make and do all sorts of things that interest them in play. And then you teach them reading, counting, and so forth, on the side, in order that they may fulfill and complete their games and other activities.

Dir. Yes. It seems the natural way of living and learning at one and the same time. For what educators are so fond of calling the tool subjects in education, *we* really maintain as tools. We regard learning to read or write or calculate as means to more complete living, not as ends in themselves.

Supt. But what about making school work too pleasant and easy, by allowing it all to degenerate into play?

Dir. I think that the complete separation of work from play is largely an adult distinction.

Supt. You don't, then, associate ease and pleasure with play, and effort and distaste with work? You don't find that the normal tendency of most boys and girls at school is to slack if they can?

Dir. That has not been my experience.

Supt. But we grown-ups have come to know what children cannot possibly realize, that much which must be met and overcome in real life is both painful and distasteful. I cannot therefore see how you can prepare children to meet the difficulties of life, if school is always interesting and pleasant for them.

Dir. Let's go back to the origin of this problem, in early childhood. I am convinced that for young children, work and play are one and the same thing—work and play, or whatever you may choose to call that all-absorbing activity, in which children lose themselves, for either long or short periods of time. That state of being is to my mind the starting-point of real education. Call it work or play, as you wish. When children are capable of giving themselves wholly to any activity, they can sooner or later be led to wider efforts in other spheres.

Supt. Yet real work is to the adult so often associated with pain and drudgery. How deal with that problem efficiently in education?

Dir. Our whole school system has, I know, been constructed on the supposition that children will go through difficult and unpleasant tasks only if forced to do so.

Supt. Yes, I had always taken that for granted.

Dir. That attitude has its source, I believe, in the burden of modern existence. People are under a constant strain, living at odds with their fundamental wish and inclination; they make a virtue of their necessity by inur-

ing their children to the same fate. Unwillingness to make real effort is certainly a human, all too human trait in man, woman, and child.

Supt. But isn't that more general among children than adults?

Dir. I haven't found it so. Children have had less time, you know, in which to acquire habits of slacking. Catch them young, and they can be saved many of our errors. That's why we want nursery schools. But the whole question as to the nature of effort is exceedingly important. Would any of those adults who are most anxious to train children, by drawing them against their natural inclination, argue that grown men and women do nothing constructive and creative in life without the pressure of drudgery and routine? No, we distinguish in adults between a sudden impulse and the power to control an immediate desire for a future satisfaction. This power is also latent and easily developed in children. If a child's interests are enlisted, if his work has a plan that he clearly understands and wishes to complete, he is quite capable of subordinating himself to both routine and drudgery for the ultimate satisfaction of a wider aim.

Supt. I can't check what you say from my own experience.

Dir. No. I realize that there is scant opportunity in any formal school to test what I am telling you. There the program is set within rigid limits. It is to the teachers and parents in these modern schools that you must turn for verification. If you question mothers and fathers who have lived in close contact with such schools you will hear much from them of the latent powers of endurance that creative education has brought out in their children. Orthodox schools, you see, still emphasize discipline and formal training as a preparation for the work of life in the

world. But life, during childhood and youth, should also be lived inside and outside of school, as both end and aim in itself—not a mere period of training for the future. Theirs is a mistaken attitude. It ignores the importance of interest and effort and joy in a child's work as well as his play.

Supt. You don't, then, discourage hard work in these new schools? I've so often heard that brought up as a criticism against them. You expect steady work from your children, even if at times they find it distasteful?

Dir. We certainly do. I am convinced we get more and better work done through our type of school organization, because children are working under the stimulus of such interest and joy in what they do. The scientist, the philosopher, and the artist, who care for their work or their art, don't stop to consider the hours of effort expended on the perfection of the work they love. And so it is with those children who lose themselves in the joy of experiment and creation.

Supt. Do you feel certain, then, that you get better results if children have this wider choice of activity under conditions of greater freedom?

Dir. Unquestionably so. As to the difference in the quality of the work accomplished, as well as in the attitude of the pupils in the new schools, you will see that for yourself when we visit the classrooms. But if you are most interested in results calculable by means of the well-known subject-matter tests, I can easily show you how far these children are ahead of the average in regular school grading.

I have been speaking only from the standpoint of the educator, the teacher in the new schools. But what particularly interests me nowadays is the growing support that science lends our efforts. For we educators stand in the

goodly company of biologists and psychologists who bring their own special evidence of the physiological value of zestful work and joyous living. And they state in no uncertain words that the physiological effects of joy and happiness on the human organism are chemically positive and constructive, while the result of submitting our bodies to suffering and to pain is negative and deleterious. Let me quote the biologist, Jennings, on this point:

> In exercising the child's powers, mental as well as physical, experimentation has come slowly and painfully to the same result which nature indicates most directly to each one of us. To develop any capability, there must be something comparable to the appetite that we find necessary for the proper nutrition of the body; the organism must have an appetite for its work. Such readiness to devote itself to the work we call interest; and work done in this condition gives pleasure. One of the most striking things in the development of modern physiology is its gradual recognition of the great value of those pleasurable emotional states which may be classified together under the abused word "joy," and of the harmfulness of the opposite emotional states—anxiety, sorrow, worry, fear, pain, and the like. The condition of happiness, of "joy," is that in which development is unhindered and flourishing; in which the functions are proceeding harmoniously; while worry, fear, unhappiness, are the marks of the reverse condition of affairs; something is blocked and is going wrong.[1]

If you look at education from the standpoint of such a scientist, then a large part of the strain in our formal school organization and methods of instruction is physiologically wrong and needs modification.

Supt. That's a new angle on it for me and makes some of this new education seem more reasonable than I'd expected.

[1] Jennings, Watson, Meyer and Thomas, *Suggestions of Modern Science Concerning Education,* pp. 42-43.

Dir. It explains, I hope, just why we wish to avoid the tension of enforced silence and stiff posture demanded of pupils in formal schools. For to us, all prohibitions that lead to nerve strain and repression of normal energy are contrary to the most recent findings of biology, psychology, and education. We have got to discover ways of redirecting and harnessing this vital force of childhood in constructive and creative work. You know better than I do how illusory is the calm maintained in a classroom of silent children by the will of the teacher. And if we penetrate her seeming activity, we uncover a weary creature attempting the well-nigh impossible task of coercing a roomful of writhing children to immobility and silent attention. And what, then, is the inner state of such pupils behind their mask of apparent conformity to school discipline? Catch a glimpse of them at the end of the day rushing from the enclosure of school walls. There is your answer, when the unnatural tension breaks into the compensatory release of fist-fights and wild play.

Supt. I've seen this. And I've realized with regret our inability to consider and respond to many of the real needs of children. Certainly the physical discipline we still maintain is absurdly stringent and archaic in its procedure. But what then do you think of the fare we supply our children in their schools?

Dir. Meager sustenance indeed, I call it.

Supt. So do I. But how set about improving it?

Dir. Not by adding fancy sauces to a tasteless diet. You see, our formal education at its best undertakes only to supply food for the mind. Body and spirit have been consistently ignored and left to take care of themselves.

Supt. But in the last thirty years many new subjects, such as carpentry, science, athletics, languages, arts, and craft-work, have been added to our curriculum.

Dir. Tacked on, as afterthoughts. But the ideal and purpose of our schools have remained the same—a mental discipline. And so the accretion of new subjects taught by old methods has made no perceptible change in the children or in the schools. A course in chemistry or carpentry can be as barren educationally as any handwriting drill or geography questionnaire. It doesn't matter how many new and up-to-date subjects you may add to the program; their mere addition is useless, so long as the old attitude and methods prevail.

Supt. And how shall we overcome this ancient heritage? For surely you wish some progress in subject matter.

Dir. Yes, of course, but only as a supplement to a changed attitude toward children. The object of the new education is just the opposite of the old. It wishes to do away with the uniform product. It does not want to produce children of one mold. It seeks individual development by encouraging such differences in type and temperament as form the base of each personality.

Supt. But would it be practically possible to treat children so individually in the large public school classes, even if one became convinced that it was good as educational technique?

Dir. If you really come to believe in this point of view, innumerable ways of transforming school organization are immediately available. And as I've suggested before, a fundamental change in a school system depends on starting at the bottom of the pile. If the original initiative of kindergarten or even younger children were helped to independent growth and expression, the boys and girls in the grades, instead of being suppressed, would astonish you by the originality and independence of their work. There is always a subsequent batch of buoyant babies born into this world in spite of man's consistent stupidity in

reducing successive generations of human animals to sheep-like docility.

You see, the new schools build on this apparently unlimited desire and interest of children to know and to do and to be. And not only does this hold true in the activity of play, but in serious work as well. We have seen under varied circumstances how children, sooner or later, want to be able to read and write and calculate in order to be at home in the world. Most youngsters, like adults, have a wish and a need to be related to life in a social way. And the three R's just happen to be tools necessary for mastering *our* kind of existence. Children are quick to understand their function and therefore become eager and ready to acquire their use at the proper time. New techniques and a different attitude make it possible to accomplish more work in only half the time formerly devoted to the three R's. And this leaves more time for children to discover their abilities and capacities in many kinds of original work.

Supt. I won't ask you now how you deal with the teaching of arithmetic, reading, and so forth, because I know I had better see some of the classes at work first.

Dir. Yes, a visit to a group is a more satisfactory answer than any theoretical explanation of mine. But since we are convinced that no amount of book knowledge can prepare children to meet the changes that are in store for them, under the speeding-up of our industrial civilization, we have to train them to rely on themselves. Since we adults are beginning to realize how little we can predict or foresee, we can scarcely forewarn children about the future. One sure obligation rests upon us—that is, to free children from a false dependence on the blind authority of teacher or textbook. We must do whatever we can to develop their independence of feeling, thought, and ac-

tion. It is literally the only way that we can arm them for an unpredictable future.

Supt. And how set about that?

Dir. By first discovering more about each child, what his particular tastes and potential abilities may be. That gets us back to what is perhaps the most fascinating problem of modern psychology; namely, the study of types.

Supt. Unfortunately, I don't dare linger over that with you, or I shall never see the school. But isn't it possible that overconcern with individual type and temperament may lead to less attention to the healthy average among children?—the children for whom, after all, our democratic system of public education was constructed.

Dir. If you're anxious to get around to visiting the school you should never have said a word about democratic ideals of education in my presence.

Supt. No?

Dir. Because I think much of our bungling with education in American universities, as well as in secondary schools, is tied up with false and sentimental conceptions of democracy.

Supt. You don't believe in it?

Dir. I didn't say that. There's a vast distinction between creating such equality of opportunity that individuals may find their rightful places according to inherent capacity or ability, and assuming, as we Americans are prone to do, that equal opportunity implies equal value among the capacities of the individuals concerned. So we jog along planning our educational schemes to fit the dull average, and allowing the unusual and exceptionally gifted to fend for themselves. The way in which we thereby waste the potential power of the most important creative force of our civilization might be called tragic, if we hadn't accustomed ourselves to playing out this farce in the name of

democracy. Nature has always had the sense to cultivate variation in every one of her species. Only man is fool enough to try to improve on nature, by a system of education that makes every child as indistinguishable as possible from any other.

Supt. Well! You have me now in the unexpected position of agreeing with you entirely. The new education is certainly right to go with nature in encouraging the obvious variation of individual children.

Dir. Why, yes. Its truest strength lies in that. Our American education seems rather proud of having adopted the general use of intelligence tests.

Supt. Why shouldn't it be? It is a more accurate measure than any we have had for estimating the exact standing and ability of children.

Dir. A more exact measure for rating children than the old-fashioned examinations, or teachers' personal estimates, yes! But when it comes to measuring children's genuine ability, they fall down.

Supt. But they do show quite accurately the difference between a child of superior and average intelligence. They are a godsend to our teachers with large classes.

Dir. That's what I've always admitted. They are useful, particularly as a more exact method of grouping and grading children. But the point against them is that they become the means of further standardization in our too uniform scheme of education. And instead of being in the vanguard of a new education, they become the bulwarks of the old. These tests are only concerned with the mental side of human development and therefore play right into the hands of pedants and academicians. The life of body and spirit is again ignored by these mental testers. They believe in the attainment of objective standards of measure

which necessitate the denial of the human qualities of personality.

Supt. By what other means, then, do you measure the development of your children?

Dir. We make psychological studies both of individual children and of interacting groups. The unconscious emotional life of the child, his family background and school adjustments, are all part of the picture. Again when you have more time, I should be glad to show you how we have developed these case-record studies of personality for normal children.

Supt. It looks as though I'd have to take a week instead of a day for this school. But why, if you feel the intelligence tests are unsatisfactory, do you use them?

Dir. I've already suggested one important reason. They do help to test so-called mental intelligence of the kind demanded in meeting grade and college requirements. And the school has, in its present phase, frankly undertaken to keep the children up to those standards, not, you understand, because we believe they are what they should be, but because we do not wish to make the adaptation or transition of these children to the present-day universities or other current activities of life too difficult. We do quite consciously undertake to meet the requirements of high school standards for college entrance examinations. But we do it in a different way. The children, right through the school, spend less time on the required subjects and are able to give more to those of special interest, whether in science, art, literature, music, or what not.

Supt. But in the last two years of college preparatory, don't you find your children must, to some extent, give up more of the special subjects in order to prepare for entering the universities?

Dir. Yes. As the college requirements now stand, that is unfortunately true. But I hope that in some not too distant future, the universities will so modify their requirements that children trained in these new schools will be accepted on the basis of their easily proved ability to work and think in a systematic, independent, and original way. We have already several university professors with us on that score. They have visited this school many times and reiterate that if only their college freshmen had some training in independent research and creative expression such as this school develops, they could begin to treat their students as adult instead of as immature.

Supt. But how do your children come off when they enter college?

Dir. Well, our oldest group will only be ready this coming year. You see, our school has grown from the bottom up, with the advance of the youngest group year by year.

Supt. It's going to be interesting to see how that oldest class does at college.

Dir. It will be interesting. But unfortunately, like so many of the attempts to keep a problem definite and clear in our educational experiments, many current conditions of human life interfere. In this case, we have not been able to keep our oldest class intact from the earliest years through college preparatory.

Supt. What a pity! Have you for some special reason lost more than the average number of children from your oldest group?

Dir. I think we have. And two definite factors come into play. Remember that although the school is now known and recognized for the work it has achieved, it has not yet carried any class through a complete high school course to college. Once it has done that, it will convince the general public of the ability of a new type of school to give more

individual training without sacrificing the present demands of college entrance examinations.

Supt. I suppose you must have had to encounter that attitude of doubt or skepticism as to the practical results of this kind of school training during all the years that you were gradually building up the intermediate as well as the high school department.

Dir. Oh, yes. The oldest class was naturally the focal point of all the doubts and questions as to the risk of this novel experiment with the adequate training of school children. And every time that oldest group had passed through any new phase of school work in an advanced grade or high school class with flying colors, then the parents of younger children in the school became that much more secure as to the future fate of their offspring.

Supt. You've convinced your parents by now, then, that you can give their children a more thorough individual education, and still prepare them for college or other professional schools if they wish?

Dir. That's about what's happened. But it had to be a gradual conquest, proved only as the oldest groups matured. But even there, as I suggested, there has been another serious obstacle to our giving a satisfactory proof of what this type of school can do for its graduates. For here in the East so many of the boys leave the city for well-known preparatory schools a year or two before entering college.

Supt. Oh, yes. They tell me that is one of the chief problems in all your co-educational high schools. With us in the Middle West, it's different.

Dir. Yes. It is impossible to hold more than half of the boys in the last two years of high school. The result for us is that a number of our most brilliant students leave before we can carry them to college. And it so happens that a

number of our girls prefer to prepare themselves for work in the arts rather than for those professions in which college is indispensable.

Supt. But how then have the boys, who leave here for regular prep schools, made their adjustment?

Dir. Oh, that has been interesting. To the surprise of most of the headmasters of these institutions, they have been among the leaders, both in regular studies and other school activities.

Supt. That ought to be so, if, as it seems, your premises for this type of training are sound.

Dir. Yes. But the amusing thing is to note the pleased astonishment of the parents of these boys, as well as the incredulity of the principals of these formal schools. At last, you see, they are face to face with concrete results that prove even to them how formal education may be wasteful and not so fundamental as they imagined.

Supt. I wish you could clear up a point about these new schools and their methods. It's a question that baffled me after reading last year's report of the National Society for the Study of Education on curriculum-making in our schools. I read it with particular interest because of my own state of unrest about the public schools. I was somewhat puzzled when I read some of Professor Bonser's and Professor Rugg's conclusions as to the laboratory schools. I remember Bonser discussed at length their use or nonuse of scientific methods. And I wanted to ask you what you thought of the steps he suggests as necessary to proceed scientifically in selecting and validating curricular material. Did you read his report?

Dir. Yes. I remember he began with the development or choice of acceptable criteria or standards for selecting materials, and methods of selecting groups of children under conditions exactly comparable to some other group

using different materials and then testing the differences in the results.

Supt. That's right. But then, Bonser continued, "Experimental schools have usually grown up as a means of experiencing and demonstrating some point of view in education derived from the recent contributions of educational philosophy and psychology. But the 'set up' is usually not inclusive of a full scientific procedure. There is provision for no testing of results in comparison with results from control situations which will afford objective evidence of measurable differences in achievement, if such exists. Both the amount and value of achievements claimed rest upon assertion rather than upon incontrovertible evidence." [1]

Dir. I'm glad you quoted him there. For what he says relates closely to what I was saying about the incompleteness of intelligence tests or subject-matter tests as a true measure of children's development. These official educators are so interested in the organization of methods and school machinery that they forget the individual and his special needs. What Professor Bonser would be satisfied with as objective evidence of measurable differences in achievement may be useful in modifying our general public school methods. But to me these tests are not incontrovertible evidence. I know too much about the way they are obtained. Statistical averages of achievement based on these tests are not real.

Supt. And what did you think, then, of the year book's estimates of the laboratory schools?

Dir. They tried hard to be fair to the efforts the new schools are making to explore new paths. But it is very difficult to understand how they can group Horace Mann

[1] 1926 Year Book of National Society for the Study of Education; Vol. I, p. 361.

and Francis Parker together with such schools as the City and Country, the Walden School, and several others, all together as agreeing "in very considerable measure in their purposes." [1]

The contrast, as I see it, between the City and Country and the Walden School and the Horace Mann and Francis Parker, is in many ways greater than the difference between, say, Horace Mann and a well-run public school.

Supt. How so?

Dir. A generation ago the Horace Mann and the Francis Parker schools were pioneers in socializing our entire school system. The best of what they developed has now been taken over by the schools of the country. And I cannot see how their organizations can any longer be called experimental, although they may yet continue to modify and improve special methods of presenting school materials.

Supt. Even I was surprised at seeing such schools called laboratory or experimental schools in this day and age.

Dir. The university professors who edited that volume know comparatively little at first hand of what is taking place in the more advanced schools. And the more they knew, the less they would approve, because these more recent schools do not accept the old standards of values that are set up as authoritative in the normal training schools of the country. As an example of what I mean, take this from Bonser's report on the laboratory schools: "Apart from these illustrations, we find very little contributed by these other so-called 'experimental schools,' of which those included in the reports are types, that satisfies the demands of scientific procedure to complete

[1] 1926 Year Book of National Society for the Study of Education, Vol. I, p. 353.

validation. Bases of appraisal in most of them are subjective and philosophical, rather than scientific." [1]

I quote that because it shows the way that Bonser brushes aside the philosophical implication of new methods and assumes the satisfying objectivity of the regular tests. Since the new schools question the very values that he sets up as the only sure ones, it is natural that their contribution, whatever it may be, should completely escape his perceptions. For to those who are attempting to cut their paths through unworked fields of education, a fresh system of education depends on a special philosophy, which is implied if not always formulated. And who does not know that all educational movements, however scientific their claims to objectivity may be, are nevertheless colored by the type and temperament of their leaders? How amusing to pursue some day at one's leisure the paradox contained in the subjectivity of the objective psychologists! [2]

You'll think it strange, after I have argued with you all morning against the weakness of the old methods in education, if I tell you that however inadequate and one-sided our system of education may be, no sudden and complete reversal of old methods seems to me either possible or desirable. I still believe that our education, like the rest of our world, must be built up by a slow and gradual growth from a complex past. And I don't for a moment believe we've begun to catch up with the profound educational vision of a Plato or a Tolstoy.

Supt. Oh, then you're not so extreme in your views as I expected.

[1] 1926 Year Book of the National Society for the Study of Education, Vol. I, p. 360.

[2] See the Dialogues of The Psychologist and a Mother and Father for discussion of tests and the subjective, philosophic, and scientific standards in psychology and education.

Dir. Probably not. Perhaps before we finish talking, you will tag me as a hopeless conservative.

Supt. Very likely!

Dir. You think I'm not serious.

Supt. Not always, I hope.

Dir. I am now. My respect for the living past moves me to transform the present. There was, you see, a particular moment in my life when profound realization of the beauty and power of a *real* tradition came to me. It happened at Oxford, on my first trip abroad, just after completing my own college course. I remember how at sight of those cloistered Gothic buildings set within carpets of greensward and English gardens, I said, "Now at last I can feel and understand what it might mean to be born where one's roots would naturally draw sustenance from the soil of the past." From that moment, the brittle efficiency and surface speed of our American psyche became evident to me. With all that can be said in favor of our vitality and power, I still feel as I did then, many years ago, that we lack that spiritual equilibrium of those who grow from their native soil. This very want is, I think, what makes us Americans subject to tides of slavish imitation. Our system of education is no more indigenous than our fashions or our arts.

Supt. It is a pity that our school methods are bound up with so much of what originated in England and Germany. Given a new country, we should have made a fresh start on our own. But the limitations of our school system were less obvious in pioneer days, when the life of farm and rural communities was a supplementary source of practical education.

Dir. A moment ago you smiled when I suggested that I might have more respect for the past than you imagined. You see, I feel it as the necessary foundation for real

growth and creative expansion for the future. And this puts me outside of the camp of those extremists who believe in laissez-faire methods in the new schools. Many of them wish to sweep aside all that has been, and say yea to all that may yet come to be. Again it is a question of values. The traditional has come to mean, in common parlance, the dead hand of the past. But whenever I go back to the source of all our human ideas and ideals, whether in the sacred books of the East, our own Bible, or the writings of a Bacon or a Swift, I am overwhelmed with the sense that there is nothing new under the sun. The most we can do is to rearrange the stuff of life in recombination and variation of fundamental theme and form.

Supt. How then did you come to find yourself in opposition to the current standards of education?

Dir. My youthful attitude, as far back as I can recall it, was not originally one of revolt against the formality of my schooling. It was rather that I began to feel cheated of what was my due. I was asking for bread and they gave me a stone. But not until I reached college was I clearly able to formulate this loss. If even today our orthodox institutions only gave their students the type of culture on which they stake their existence, I, for one, would have no quarrel with them. I could then respect them for a sincere accomplishment. But our schools, whose strength depended on a system of drill teaching and formal discipline, can apparently no longer deliver the goods. Not even in students trained for a routine-like efficiency. And my comments are not merely those of a carping outsider. Within the orthodox system are to be found many intelligent and critical educators like yourself, as well as bands of restless students, ready to vouch for the aridity of our pretentious education.

Supt. The tenor of what you say is all too true. I might bring in some extenuating circumstances due to overcrowded classes and the lack of adequate teachers. But those are secondary to your critique. I admit that the slavery of formal routine consumes and constricts education. And many of the solid results which might formerly have been cited to justify it have fled.

Dir. Children still go through years of drudgery, practicing handwriting drills and problems in multiplication and subtraction—not alive in terms of thought and creation, but half dead in barren efforts to repeat what is expected of them. And sad to relate, these methods no longer produce even those perfect automatons who were at least able, in former days, to read, write, and calculate fluently.

Supt. Do you know, it was just because I saw that the old methods were failing to produce competent pupils that I first listened to the talk of my teachers about these experimental schools. I thought in secret, "Those new schools couldn't be worse, and they just might be better than the ones we now have." That's what finally brought me here. But I had an impression from what I'd heard that since you were so absorbed in the creative activities, you might not lay stress, as we do, on such subjects as reading or arithmetic.

Dir. I'm interested in every subject that can be included in education. But not perhaps in quite the way you would be. Your responsible position in the administration of our public school system carries with it the immediate necessity of dealing with such subjects as the three R's in a direct and immediate manner.

But to me, all subjects are of interest in relation to the development of individual children, whether reading or arithmetic, carpentry or music, scene-painting or mathe-

matics. They are all only aspects of an educational plan that must be conceived of as a whole.

Supt. How then would a curriculum be less important from your point of view than mine?

Dir. In the sense that our type of school does not depend for its existence on a single inflexible arrangement of subject matter. But on the other hand, this school, as well as other modern ones, regards a school program as so important that it can accept no stereotyped organization of subject matter. They insist on dealing with a curriculum by fitting it to the children, instead of forcing the children into the limits of a completed program.

Supt. I should not have been surprised to find the usual school program entirely set aside in such a school as yours. But how do you justify your statement that the curriculum is nevertheless more important in an experimental than in a formal school?

Dir. It's important not in its rigidity, but in its flexibility. You see, when one starts out to build up a school around the needs and interests of children, and not upon a theoretically conceived program, the curriculum by its very nonexistence becomes a matter of constant and serious thought.

Supt. I don't quite get your point. Maybe you started your school without a preconceived program. But by building up slowly, expanding year by year from your new foundations, you could evolve a new type of school organization as you grew.

Dir. That's just what happened.

Supt. But then I see on that wall right opposite me what appears to be a blueprint of a most complex and varied school program. Is that in use at the present time?

Dir. Yes, it is.

Supt. But this program of yours includes a long afternoon schedule, as well as a morning plan. In fact, it seems far more elaborate than any curriculum carried in our public schools. And your hours are also longer than ours.

Dir. I was not arguing against an organized nor for an oversimplified school curriculum. I only wanted the program, when it was evolved, to be based on the needs of children and not on the convenience of administrators. Our plan is, of course, infinitely more complex than those of a public school or of the other regular schools. And for good reason. First of all, we undertake to develop an all-day scheme of life for the city child. This means that this school makes itself responsible for a plan of work, rest, and recreation, to satisfy both the group and individual needs of each pupil. Such a program includes, besides the familiar school subjects, work in the various arts and sciences, special excursions, indoor and outdoor sport and play, study hours, rest periods, and hot lunches.

Supt. That makes a school responsible for a lot in a child's life.

Dir. It is already, I think, but often on the debit instead of the credit side.

Supt. How did you first set out to develop your new school organization?

Dir. I'll only mention a few points that will give you a clue to what we are going to see. For if we don't go soon to the nursery group, they will be out on the roof playground, and I don't want you to miss them indoors.

Every class has its own group teacher. But as the children advance, specialists are included for various subjects. Each of the younger groups has two adjoining classrooms, one meant for the quieter activities, the other for carpentry and more strenuous group interests.

Supt. And how large are the classes?

Dir. About fifteen or sixteen—large enough to create a group feeling and yet allow for considerable individual attention.

Supt. Besides classrooms, you have a number of shops, laboratories, and studios?

Dir. Yes. But again I won't attempt at this late hour to go into the technique of our creative approach in these subjects. I'll only suggest that in developing a program of work, we have tried to adjust the time spent on any one subject to the degree of interest and power of concentration that children at different ages exhibit.

Supt. For example?

Dir. Well, we quickly discovered that frequent twenty-minute periods for young children, in such subjects as French and music, gave better results than say half-hour or more time twice a week. We found that for experimental science or the creative arts, periods of at least an hour and a half were necessary for children as young as nine or ten, if they were to make the best use of laboratory and studio. In other subjects such as history, or Latin, or mathematics, a fifty-minute period seemed adequate.

Supt. But what a task to make such a program dovetail into a practical working scheme!

Dir. It's not easy. But as I told you, we want to put the needs of the children before our own convenience. Try for a moment to imagine the position I was in when I started this school; it will give more meaning to the activities you may presently see. I did not go into education, as many do, because it was the obviously available field after college. No. My own school experience had been so unsatisfactory that education was the last thing I wished to touch. Only when a fundamental change in our present system became a practical possibility to me did I find myself committed to education. From the very beginning, I

saw that there might be two ways of modifying orthodox education, either to enter the system and work from within, or to make a fresh start, outside of all accepted institutions, and construct a plan with new foundations. As you see, the latter was to be my approach.

Supt. Have you ever had any experience with our public school system?

Dir. Oh, yes. I once even tried an experiment in the kindergarten department of the New York City schools. I wanted at first to work from within our present system, if that were possible. I remember how some of the other teachers in that public school would smile somewhat sadly and sympathetically at me, as they watched my daily struggle against the obstructions of the Kindergarten Department and the Board of Education. When I failed to obtain even the minimum necessities in equipment, these teachers would say, "You haven't been here long enough to know that you must eventually either give up and conform to the system or get out." They were right. In six months I resigned. It was then I began to concentrate on the development of this school. It grew from the conviction that we must start our individual as well as group education with children of nursery age, if not younger.

Supt. And that was before the war had helped to popularize the idea of nursery schools in England?

Dir. Oh, yes. The attempt was based on the findings of the new analytic psychology, which had already shown so clearly that the life of adults had generally been set and determined before they had reached school age.

Supt. I'm particularly anxious to see your youngest group. I can't imagine what they can do with themselves in a school.

Dir. After you've seen them, you may modify your words and say, "What can't those infants of two or three

do for themselves, if they only get a chance?" We'll start by visiting the nursery group first.

Supt. Yes, I'd like to get a bird's-eye view of the school as a whole, beginning with the youngest class.

Dir. A word of warning, though, before we go. My own contact with people who are trying to develop modern as well as formal schools has made me skeptical. They *say* they are doing a certain thing, but I see them doing something else. Forewarned, it's up to you not to accept any rash statement of mine as to what we do in the school. Come with me now and see for yourself whether our theory and practice coincide.

Here, you see, is the nursery group, babies from two to three. If I had my way, which means money enough to carry out the scheme perfectly, we'd have a nursery for six-months infants as well as a group of year-old youngsters.

Supt. But even two years old seems extremely young to put a child in school. I'm not sure that I approve.

Dir. Come and sit down here in the room and see what's happening before you decide.

Supt. I remember so well that when I began my teaching, people objected to the idea of children's going to kindergarten at the age of four or five. And you take them here at two, and would like them at six months! But really, what can a two-year-old child do in school that is important enough for a teacher's attention?

Dir. Look at what's going on right here now. The children in this room will answer you.

[The School Superintendent sees a dozen children scattered about the room. Half of them are spread about the floor of the room. A couple of two-year-old boys are placing large blocks in the form of a walled enclosure, while a serious little girl brings them an armful of wooden

tigers, elephants, giraffes, and zebras, saying, "Lock them up quickly inside the cage before they run away. They are very wild." One child is digging alone in a sandbox, in the corner of the room, with his back to all the others. Another is brushing up crumbs from the floor with dust-pan and broom, while his assistant clears away the empty milk cups. A wiry red-haired lad is riding around on a kiddie-kar, delivering mail to the others. The teacher happens to be on the farther side of the room, encouraging a child who doesn't quite dare jump from the top of some small steps. As the superintendent's eye roves around the room he relaxes and smiles a bit.]

Supt. Well, it's true. I wouldn't have believed it possible if any one had told me that all these children of two and three could remain peacefully in a room together like this, all doing various things at one and the same time, without constantly snatching and grabbing and interfering with each other. I notice how the teacher doesn't seem to be running the group at all. I see that the atmosphere is not the same as in a kindergarten. There appears to be no definite organization. But I know enough about small children to realize that if a dozen youngsters of two or three were left in a room alone, they would not be able to achieve this kind of harmonious and independent activity. I should certainly like to follow the phases through which such a group of babies pass from the beginning of the school term. You know, it's curious, too, that although these children are younger than any kindergarten class I've ever seen, they nevertheless give me the impression of being older. It comes, I think, from the way they go ahead to do things on their own, waiting for no suggestion or direction from the teacher.

Dir. I'm interested to hear you say that, because I've had just the same impression myself. When I'm with

this young group during school hours I have such a definite sense of their individual personalities that I am utterly surprised when I sometimes encounter them on their way to school, led by the hand of some father or nurse. I can't believe that such tiny children, dropped back to the dimensions of an adult world, are identical with these independent young creatures that we are now observing.

Supt. I see now why it must be difficult to find the right teachers for such a school.

Dir. Yes, it makes greater demands on the teachers; but at the same time it gives more to the creative ones. As we visit the classes you will see how infinitely artful this type of teaching must be. For these new schools, a teacher ought to have a rich cultural background, some scientific training as an impersonal observer, and above all, an original and creative spirit.

Supt. But where can you find the right teachers for these schools?

Dir. We should really train our own school staff, but since that is not possible at present, we have to select from those available in the normal training schools, and then help them to gain our point of view.

I remember how Professor Dewey used to say that science students made better teachers for his experimental school than any of those regularly trained for the task. But although the power to observe children impersonally is essential, the training of other qualities is equally important. Have you ever thought what slight emphasis is put on training teachers to grapple with the mainsprings of human action? If modern medicine has come to realize that one of its most profound duties is the healing of sick souls, how much more should modern education realize its responsibility of maintaining the spiritual health of

childhood! For this, the new teachers need a deeper knowledge of their own unconscious emotional life, as well as that of their pupils. But it is equally important that parents as well as teachers should know more of this inward life of their children. For when subject matter is no longer permitted to displace human values, the growth of a creative school depends on the constant development and transformation of all the human beings concerned with the school; this includes teachers and parents as well as children. For boys and girls cannot orient themselves in a more sympathetic type of school organization if the adults in contact with them are not working in unison. I have often said, you know, that the real problem of a modern school is not the development of its children, but the right training and adjustment of its teachers and parents.

Supt. So the founding of a new school commits one to far more than the education of its children. It practically implies schooling for teachers and parents also.

Dir. Certainly, if the reconstruction of education goes deeper than mere alteration of external form and leads to a transvaluation of values. Then not only must our schools be recreated, but even the texture of all our lives as parents and teachers must enter into this process of change and amalgamation.

Second Dialogue

The Sociologist and the Director

Sociologist. Why do you develop your ideas on education in a private school? Such a school as this should not be isolated under the special conditions of a private school.

Director. You're saying what I've always thought, ever since I hoped to make my dream of what a school might be come true. But don't forget that we do admit a large percentage of scholarship children.

Soc. Yes, but that doesn't extend the variety of your pupils beyond the limits of the professional and business middle class. Does it?

Dir. We include some of the labor group. But I feel as you do, that this new type of education ought to be developed to meet the more general questions of our public education. And you probably don't know that I did not choose the conditions of a private school for this work. But it is apparently the only milieu where such fresh developments are possible today.

Soc. Did you ever try to work in our city schools?

Dir. I certainly did. And it was there that in the early days I had most hoped to do something. But after two years of my effort to break through the rigid licensing conditions, those in power simply sabotaged the experiment. Nothing in the world is so easy as to assent to an

experiment and then to make it impossible by refusing the necessary means.

Soc. It's been the experience of others, too; that I know.

Dir. After that I tried many other means, every possible way I could think of to get the right opening for a significant educational experiment. You will be astonished, I imagine, to hear that not until I became convinced that every other approach involved too great a compromise with one's integrity as an educator, did I finally come to accept the conditions of a private school. And it seems to me that as the world is now constituted, though our milieu is restricted to a somewhat special economic and social group, it is the most genuine laboratory possible for a disinterested social experiment in education today. Whatever has been developed under these social conditions could be easily adapted to other environments, for the same principles of approach are universally valid.

Soc. Yes, that's true enough. But what other attempts did you make to get an opening for your experiment?

Dir. Oh, everything from a day nursery to a settlement and a labor group.

Soc. And none of them prospered?

Dir. Well, I soon learned that each of these social groups had some particular personal interest and concern in life, some ax to grind, to put it frankly, and it was never education.

Soc. Yes (*laughing*), that's about it. As a sociologist I can do nothing but agree with that grim truth.

Dir. The public schools are so concerned with reproducing what has been, and so buried in politics, that nothing can be hoped from them at present.

Soc. And the settlements?

Dir. Well, like most pioneer organizations that have be-

come institutionalized, their spirit has died. They belonged to a previous generation, to a time before the war when most people believed in America as a land of promise and democracy. Then the settlements were born, and then their faith gave them a function. Now—well, why should I tell you all that? You know it, too.

Soc. Yes, their chief concern is to find more money to make more and greater settlements. They are almost as much of a vested interest as the great trust funds for social and educational work.

Dir. Yes, at the settlement where I worked for a while, they were not concerned with the fundamentals of education. They were glad to have me there so long as I could be tagged as one more side show to their three-ringed circus.

Soc. And with the labor groups? You fared no better?

Dir. Well, with labor in America it's not easy to find an opening.

Soc. No. Their organizations are so busy looking after particular trade conditions. Over here they've not moved very far, even in their adult education.

Dir. Right after the war, I heard that one of the most prominent and most advanced of the labor unions was acquiring a building of its own, for club as well as labor and educational purposes. They asked me to advise them on some practical educational scheme for their children. "Labor in America," I began to think, "is much more up and coming than I'd imagined." Already I was conceiving a labor group ready to value and bring into existence a modern school such as the public schools dared not attempt.

Soc. I see you had had little experience, in those days, of American labor.

Dir. Yes, then. But I know better now. In the whole

union there were only one or two men anxious to hear about a new approach to education. The rest—well, they had only one concern in connection with their children's schooling.

Soc. And that was?

Dir. To see to it that their boys and girls got all the false supplementary teaching that would approximate the pseudo-culture of the leisure class.

Soc. So it was as bad as that.

Dir. Yes, so bad that I fortunately never committed myself to educational work with that or any union. It doesn't make one too optimistic about the promise of our so-called democracy.

Soc. I am rather relieved to note that you have no remnant of romantic hope that a social panacea is obtainable through any of the present social or economic groups.

Dir. No, that died for me with the war. Any possibility of an immediate social or economic escape from the impasse of our civilization has become quite remote and rather absurd to me now. I've lived to see that whether people fought to save democracy or imperialism does not make the profound difference I had once hoped. I've wakened to a complete realization that all social and economic groups have identical methods of acting and reasoning, according to whether they are *in* or *out* of power.

Soc. You're disillusioned, like most of our younger generation. But isn't it better so, since it's a little nearer the truth than all our American oratory about democracy?

Dir. Disillusioned, yes. But not without one hope: that although one can do nothing directly with social and economic groups as they now exist, one can do something with individual youth, which may tend later to transform particular social groups and ultimately to affect a wider world.

Soc. That sounds very much as though you still believed in the old slogan of progress, if not of democracy, anyway.

Dir. Now you're twitting me a bit, because you know I no more accept the American complacency about progress, efficiency, and so forth, than you do.

Soc. Well, I'll admit the charge. But I wanted to draw you out, to discover how you can go so much against the current of public opinion and maintain a school.

Dir. But I find a strong and sympathetic element flowing with me.

Soc. Come, now! You don't mean to tell me that the parents of your children agree with you!

Dir. Only a minority, if I talked with them in the terms you and I are using. But below the American readiness to plan and talk and act for immediate, practical returns, there lurks a deep doubt of the resultant values of our great-scale business methods, a growing distrust of our wholesale Americanization schemes, and a big question as to our short cuts to democracy.

Soc. In what way do the parents meet your attitude? For of course they wouldn't send their children to you if they were not in accord with your views.

Dir. There is naturally a great divergence in the attitude of the parents. And undoubtedly, as in other schools, some parents send their children just because the school seems to help their boys and girls.

Soc. But I must not forget that you are dealing with a carefully selected group of parents.

Dir. Yes, the majority are professional people. Some are connected with business and financial enterprises, and some with labor and the arts. But they come by different channels to an agreement with my views. Those who are creative artists, or exist under the strain of certain underpaid

professions, have immediate personal reasons to question our modern social and economic values.

Soc. That goes without saying.

Dir. But what interests me so much is that the others show a growing realization of the inadequacy of those material values by which America seeks to justify its existence.

Soc. But you don't change a banker's or a lawyer's viewpoint overnight. He has too much at stake.

Dir. I don't mean that anything so obvious or so simple as that occurs. But I have discovered such a profound realization of the incompleteness of their apparently successful lives that they are often even searching for other values. And when they get a sense that their children are being helped to a knowledge of their inner capacities which may release them to live on a deeper plane, they are glad, and strengthen our efforts to bring this about.

Soc. But aren't you always meeting in these parents a certain fear of change, which is a constant of the human species?

Dir. Of course we've had to fight every inch of the way in building up this new type of school.

Soc. But particularly a fear that if children go to such a school they will be different, too different from their friends? Don't the business men worry sometimes lest in a school where such emphasis is placed on individual development, their children may turn into penniless poets or painters?

Dir. Oh, yes, that happens. But don't forget that most of our present-day artists have been drawn from more or less prosperous middle-class families, long before modern schools were born.

Soc. Yes (*laughing*), that's true enough. But will that stop a father who is a doctor or a judge from distrusting

an atmosphere in which such a possible avocation as art is treated seriously?

Dir. There are such parents. But before I say any more of them, I think I'll have to remind you that, after all, our purpose in this school is to adapt the creative approach in education to the sciences, mathematics, history, politics, and other subjects as well as to the arts.

Soc. Yes, that's true enough. The debate I heard on the League of Nations in the oldest group, and the thirteen-year-old class in anthropology, were clear enough proof of that.

Dir. And the boy or girl who wants to go into a science or any practical career has a better chance to discover his true bent in a school where every variety of human activity is encouraged than in one which specializes within the limits of book knowledge.

Soc. Of course that's so. Don't misunderstand me. I was not personally raising objections to this type of school as a more adequate preparation for life. I'm all for it. My questions were meant to discover how far the parents met or understood this school. For, after all, such places as this are still pretty rare. And as I'm not likely in the course of my own job to underestimate the power of the herd over social opinion, I was most interested in the motives that you said drew parents into co-operating with your school. But the right place for such an experiment as this school would be within the campus of one of our big universities, as an adjunct to a real Department of Education. Wouldn't such a setting be ideal?

Dir. It would, of course, if it were possible. That's just where such experiments should be going on. But look around and tell me where they are. I remember when I first returned to America years ago, fired with the idea of getting to the root of this education business, how care-

fully I looked about and tried to discover a single university interested in making a fundamental study of how children lived and grew. Had I found such a place, I should have gone there immediately. But our universities are not concerned primarily with the education of children. If they do have schools attached to them, it is for the purpose of staging demonstrations for teaching teachers how to teach what has already been taught. And since they were not primarily interested in discovering the basic mechanisms and needs of children in the light of modern science and a changing world, they were not the place for me.

Soc. If the professors of education in our universities ever stopped to study children, they would have to stop manufacturing thousands of young people into stereotyped teachers for a while, and they would have to turn their efforts to discovering the fundamental mechanisms and complex needs of children. And if they did but take the time to apply even a small part of the recently available psychological and biological knowledge to educational methods, why, the result would revolutionize the training of teachers. Ninety per cent. of what is taught now could be thrown on the scrap heap. All the antiquated textbook teaching by rote should be thrown out. No more theory should be taught; only the experiment set, that may lead children themselves to think out conclusions. All teaching has got to get down into terms of living. You're doing that here. And it gives me confidence in what I had always thought could be accomplished.

But how far is it safe to go in encouraging extreme personal development? It's a serious problem. After all, society's fear of and punishment of too great a variation from its norm has its function. Don't you think so?

Dir. You mean if we assume that the purpose of society

is to reproduce itself as exactly as possible from generation to generation.

Soc. That's certainly what the pull of herd instincts tries to make us do.

Dir. Yes, but it's not what you believe should be encouraged in education.

Soc. As a place for the study of the embryonic efforts of the genus man to become adult in an adult world, this school is amazing. Here the interior mechanisms of human relationship are revealed as under glass, stripped to their essential forms. Your environment is really such that with the aid of the conscious attitude of your teachers, you allow an emergence and crystallization of both individual and group forces.

Dir. Yes, I've been making a great effort to study under these conditions just the inner, the unconscious life of these shifting alignments of children, to see how the unfolding patterns of individual and group existence move and blend.

Soc. In that lies the only way to penetrate the unreleased forces of human existence. But I noticed you used the word "unconscious" just now. In what sense do you mean it?

Dir. In just the special way that interests you and that made you ask that question, to see whether I was aware of the psychoanalytic use of the term. I started the school with the purpose of applying the principles of analytic psychology to the education of normal children. I welcomed psychoanalysis as an educational technique, as soon as I came in contact with it, some fourteen years ago. I believed in it as a means of helping both individuals and groups in a modern school to gain fresh orientation according to their innermost needs.

Soc. Why, I never knew that you started your school from that approach.

Dir. No, few people did. And for good reason. There was no interest among educators then in the application of analysis. They scarcely knew of its existence. And secondly, there was still such a general prejudice against the principles of this new science, among physicians as well as laymen, that during the early years I deliberately avoided any use of analytic terminology in describing the work of the school to the public. And it was perfectly possible without openly adopting the lingo of psychoanalysis to create the right type of environment for the release of the unconscious emotional life of children into positive and personal expression.

The analysts on their side were so absorbed at that time in their own special cases of damaged adults that they showed little interest in my earliest attempts to relate analysis to the education of normal children.

Soc. But now that has changed?

Dir. Oh, yes. Many of them now co-operate closely with the school. For years I worked at the problem almost single-handed, but I was fortunate enough to have gathered around me an unusual group of teachers and parents who gradually turned to analysis in order to obtain a deeper understanding of their own lives as well as those of their children.

Soc. So a large proportion of both the teachers and parents of this school have been analyzed.

Dir. Oh, yes. At least half the teachers, while the rest are equally interested in the application of analytic principles to our general educational scheme. And you can well imagine how the increased understanding of parents, as well as of teachers who have been analyzed, has been

of enormous importance in dealing with the basic adjustment of children in such a school.

Soc. I suppose you have kept records and made special case studies of children from this point of view?

Dir. Oh, yes. Over many years.

Soc. Have you printed any of it?

Dir. Not yet. We wanted to wait until a certain body of material was complete. But if you're interested I can show you some studies of both individual children and entire groups made here with the application of the analytic technique.

Soc. I'm most eager to see them. I expect they'll throw much light on some of the very problems I'm battling with in my own work.

Dir. It seems to me that the analysts have been so intent on getting neurotic individuals adjusted to society as it is that they have given too little attention to the transformation of the conditions of society. I mean that they have taken far too little interest in adjusting their technique to normal children for a normal life. Most analysts draw a sharp distinction between those neurotic youngsters who are cases for special analytic treatment and the majority of other children who, not too obviously maladjusted, can stand the rough and tumble of regular school life. It is surprising how readily most analysts accept the conventional type of school environment as just one more bit of unpleasant and necessary reality to which children must be taught to conform. They fail to take into consideration that a large proportion of our maladjusted adults could in a more adaptable school situation have been transformed into satisfactorily functioning and creative individuals.

Problem children, if dealt with in early years, are rarely so inferior organically as not to be amenable to some spe-

cial adjustment of their difficulties in a modern school environment. It is generally the conflict of forces at work in the home that needs sympathetic redirection to induce positive functioning.

Soc. Your effort to work out psychoanalytic technique in relation to group and individual adjustments in this school will, I'm sure, be useful to all of us in the social sciences. But tell me, don't you sometimes have the same difficulty with parents and teachers that I encounter in my own field? I mean resistance from the type of person that denies the importance, if not the very existence, of an inner emotional life?

Dir. Oh, yes, that happens. The most recent was a parent, an anthropologist, whom you know.

Soc. Yes?

Dir. Dr. Aitken, who has recently placed his boy in the school. The reason he brought him to us will, I'm sure, interest you.

Soc. I know Dr. Aitken well enough to say that he tries to run away from his personal life whenever he can. And I suppose he has therefore constantly to deal with some such difficulty with his own child. What was the boy's problem?

Dir. As you suggest, it was really the problem of the parents reflected in the child. The boy kept escaping from the last school where he was, to ride around all day in the subway. We gradually built up a sense of independence and security in him, so that he soon felt his own importance in the school group. We had to do a lot of work with both parents, but they gradually began to realize how he had been ignored and emotionally starved at home.

Soc. Didn't Dr. Aitken come to see that his denial of his own emotional life was the root of the boy's maladjustment?

Dir. Oh, partly, but not fundamentally. A genuine realization of that would have meant an acceptance and knowledge of self such as, I guess, few of us ever attain so swiftly. There were moments when he saw and admitted that his son's state of instability was largely due to inadequate emotional response from both his parents. But the boy was so different in type from his father. To the child the inner life was the chief value; to the father, the world of objective experience—an almost unbridgeable gap.

Soc. One wouldn't expect a man like Aitken to understand.

Dir. But I really only mentioned that episode to you apropos of the long argument about civilization that I was drawn into with the boy's father.

Soc. Yes, I remember. You cited Aitken as a striking example of those who deny the validity of inner values.

Dir. Well, one day Dr. Aitken wanted to talk about the way in which social standards evolve. Naturally he put his weight behind the economic factors of the environment and the general cultural conditions of the group.

Soc. And you, just as naturally, came to the defense of the individuals who made up that society.

Dir. Yes, of course, but only so as to insist that both the individuals and the group were indispensable to any cultural evolution. Then I went on to question whether the social standards held by any society were necessarily suitable to all the individuals in that particular environment. Aitken was disturbed. He didn't like that.

Soc. You must have found yourself in the thick of a discussion of individual and group psychology.

Dir. I did. What bothered Dr. Aitken was my refusal to accept as satisfactory any of the psychological standards current as tests of normality.

Soc. Good for you! Where did that lead you?

Dir. Well, I told him that while I thought psychoanalysis was important as an instrument for exploring the psychological mechanisms of the individual, it had gone astray in attempting to set up standards of normality.

Soc. You've hit one of my chief criticisms of analytic procedure. I've always said analysts had lost their perspective on human values. They have dealt so long with abnormal variations of the human species that they make the mistake of setting up as the norm a standard which is nothing but the result of a statistical average—just what the majority of human beings conform to in social conduct.

Of course, I don't expect anything more intelligent from the man in the street. He would naturally regard whatever he and his friends did—and they would all be sure to give the identical response under similar conditions—as the correct and only way to act.

But I did hope for more detachment and penetration from our analytical friends. However much they now disagree among themselves on technique and method, they have not yet quarreled over this conception of an average standard to which all individuals should approximate. Freud assumes, as Trotter points out, a standard of normality based on nothing but a statistical average instead of on what would be normal to the particular type and temperament of the given individual. "The objective standard of validity by which the system [psychoanalysis] was judged was necessarily that of the physician, namely the capacity to restore the abnormal mind to the 'normal.' Normal in this sense is of course no more than a statistical expression implying the condition of the average man. It could scarcely fail, however, to acquire the significance of 'healthy.' If once the statistically normal mind is accepted as being synonymous with the psychologically healthy

mind (that is, the mind in which the full capacities are available for use), a standard is set up which has a most fallacious appearance of objectivity." [1]

What sense is there in taking the dull middle-class average and setting that up as the norm for all individuals? The average is the average, but it is no standard by which to estimate the extraordinary person, whether he is especially gifted in mind, feeling, or sensibilities. The scientist, philosopher, and artist all fall into this grouping.

Now many of the analysts I know, instead of welcoming and strengthening this variation from the average, tend, like most of our educational institutions, to discourage this divergence and to press individuals back into what they honor with the name of reality. And what is this reality that analysts point out to their patients? Nothing but the objective world, the world of things as they are.

Dir. It is good to hear you say, with even more heat and conviction than I do, what I have been trying to make people listen to for some years. So many of them have balked at that question of standards. "If," they asked, "you deny the so-called average standards as a true norm to which everybody should conform, are there any standards of human development left to go by?" I have tried so often to explain that such norms were eventually possible on the psychological as well as the biological plane.

Soc. By that you mean?

Dir. Well, just as one now accepts the actuality of the physical evolution of an individual through the biological phases described as infancy, childhood, youth, and so forth, it is equally possible to work toward the uncovering of psychological aspects of human development that parallel the biological. And this is one of the points at which I believe psychoanalysis can make a real contribu-

[1] W. Trotter, *Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War,* pp. 78-79.

tion to education. With its special technique it is possible to discover a series of psychological norms to correspond to those known on the physical plane of our growth, so that eventually parallel norms of interior and exterior development become possible. Ferenczi was the analyst whom I found most suggestive in this field. His essay on "Stages in the Development of a Sense of Reality" [1] helped me to get a practical start on this problem in our school.

Soc. It is only a matter of time now, isn't it, until you complete a psychological as well as a physiological picture of the phases of a child's development from infancy to maturity?

Dir. I believe that our records are showing more and more clearly the trends of psychological evolution. But there are always innumerable variations, due to type, temperament, and environment, that have to be allowed for, which naturally interfere with any too dogmatic generalization.

Soc. But there is one difficulty in your path.

Dir. What's that?

Soc. The norms for individual development may be at odds with what a given period of society sets up as its ideal. The best interests of an individual and of the herd are not always the same, though they may coincide.

Dir. Yes, there's always the possibility of friction between the development of individuals and the demands of society.

Soc. Most of the analysts, in setting up their statistical averages, tell all individuals to try to conform to society. But there is one man, Dr. Burrow, no longer calling himself an analyst, who some years ago challenged their social

[1] S. Ferenczi, *Sex in Psychoanalysis*, p. 213.

viewpoint and came so close to my own that I want to read you what he said.

"For example, as this organic denial and the restless compensations and substitutions comprising the unconscious are in essence the psychology of the mental reaction-average known as normality, it is no longer possible for me to accord with the popular analytic view which places a premium upon this manifestation of the collective unconscious and assigns the criterion of normality as the desired goal of adaptation for the neurotically repressed personality. . . .

"I cannot accept this deduction. For an analysis of the social unconscious shows that the collective reaction embodied in normality betrays a tendency to repression and replacement that is no less an indication of disease-process than is the individual reaction presented in the neurosis. Indeed, from the point of view of constructive consciousness and health, so-called normality is of the two the less progressive type of reaction, because normality, in evading the issues of the unconscious, envisages less the processes of growth and a larger consciousness than the neurotic type of reaction. . . .

"Normality, too, is neurotic. Normality, too, has its repressions and its secret substitutions, its symbols and equivocations. The difference is that normality, possessing the warrant of the institutionalized and current, enjoys the protection of conventionality. . . .

"Thus the unconscious represented in the social reaction we call normality is no whit different from the unconscious represented in the individual reaction observable in the neurosis. . . ." [1]

[1] Trigant Burrow, "Psychoanalysis in Theory and Life," in *Proceedings of the International Conference of Women Physicians,* Vol. IV, p. 15 ff.

Most analysts are unfortunately tied hand and foot to those very conventions of society which they have recognized as destructive to their patients. Burrow is much less fixed.

Dir. His statement is challenging. It immediately raises all the problems as to the meaning and function of repression in society.

Soc. Oh, yes. Freud in explaining how "civilization comes from repression" and "repression from civilization" explains that "civilization is based upon the repressions effected by former generations and that each fresh generation is required to maintain this civilization by effecting the same repressions." [1]

Dir. But while the Freudians regard this mechanism of repression as the chief cause of the existence of the unconscious, Jung and his school give it less importance.

Soc. Yes. They use only the concept of repression as an accessory mechanism producing a particular part of the unconscious. For they claim that the conception of individual repression, in the Freudian sense, only partly explains the varied aspects of the unconscious. And that's where Jung splits with Freud and brings in his concept of a racial as well as an individual unconscious. This implies the existence of two types of repression: one in relation to the race mind, the other in relation to the personal and individual life. The racial would naturally be the most archaic or primitive. To me it seems a most fruitful hypothesis in relation to my own work in the social sciences. But what we must not forget is that at the present time these are merely hypotheses, that there are no facts to prove them.

How far afield we've gone from our original discussion of the tendency of certain types to evade the ac-

[1] Sigmund Freud, *Collected Papers,* Vol. I, p. 346.

ceptance of inner values! Suddenly I recall now that there was still something I wanted to tell you in that connection. When the sociologist, William Ogburn, wrote a book on *Social Change*, he, too, wanted to evade this human problem of man's adjustment through the control of his own inner resources. And to do so he quite seriously suggested that we must try to discover some mechanical means to improve the use of our own psychological equipment. "Some invention," he suggests, "that will do for the mechanisms of instinct what the gymnasium does for the muscles." [1] Isn't that marvelous! This idea of escaping from the entire neural and emotional organization of man by inventing an instrument for exercising such structures, without even having to deal directly with any of our pesky personal and subjective states! A complete reduction of all life to quantitative measures of value by objectively controlled instruments! That's what Ogburn and all these objective scientists really want. There is a curious lapse of memory, in these scientific mechanists, as to the prime source of their innumerable instruments of measurement. They forget that man himself once invented them, and that before man had developed scales of weight and measure, he had of necessity to use his own body as the only available instrument for that purpose.

Dir. I don't quite follow you.

Soc. That's natural enough. I don't suppose you ever stopped to consider how man did his weighing and his measuring before he had invented such substitute instruments as scales, slide-rules, and so forth.

Dir. No, I never did.

Soc. Well, means of appraisal in terms of mathematical weights and measures are only recent mechanical projections of that fine discrimination man originally contained

[1] William Ogburn, *Social Change*, p. 353.

within the limits of his own body. Depending as we do now on exterior means of evaluation, we have lost that subtle kinaesthetic sense of awareness which our own organisms at one time possessed. So that now it is almost impossible for any of us to realize that in the early days of barter and exchange, units of value must have been estimated according to uniform scales standardized by the keenly developed tactual, visual, and kinaesthetic sensations of all those concerned in the trade. Now do you see what it means when I say that scales of measurement were originally developed as an exact interior discrimination within man's own body?

Dir. Yes. That's a tremendously suggestive idea. All these man-made instruments of measurement are then truly dependent on man's own interior power of recognizing scales or degrees of sound, color, weight, and size within his own organism.

Soc. Yes, of course. That's what makes me wonder at the behaviorists who really think they can ever escape from the source of life that lies *within*, not *without*, the human creature.

It's all very well for a certain type of psychologist to run away from considering man in terms of human values. The behaviorists may for their own purposes exclude all but objectively measurable actions. But that won't do for social scientists. We are as much concerned with the inward design of man's cultural life as with the outer form of his reaction pattern.

It's strange how we are forever tying ourselves up in knots, hypothetical knots most of the time. If it's not one way, it's another. Lindeman points it out: "The present generation of social scientists is just emerging from the use of the concept of instinct as the determinant which accounts for all otherwise inexplicable behavior. But the

yoke of instincts is no sooner lifted than these self-same scientists sell themselves into the bondage of habits. Man *is* a habit-made creature. There is no disgrace in this admission, nor is there any grace. The hope of mankind lies in the fact that he is both a habit-making and a habit-breaking being. If the social sciences are to become something more than merely descriptive, they must give attention to human behavior variables—to the modes according to which new habits are created." [1]

Which means, to me, that our job is to be concerned with those creative activities of the human race through all the ages, for they are the key to the nature of man.

Dir. Yes, and I agree with you that those scientists who deny the existence of interior values carry their objective technique to the point of absurdity and lose touch with the very nature of man.

Soc. Has it ever struck you that since anthropologists and sociologists now place the undifferentiated primal horde as anterior in cultural evolution to the individual or family unit, some of the much-lauded virtues of our modern socialized existence may, after all, be rooted in primitive gregariousness, antecedent rather than consequent to a later individuation? What a shock to our self-pride if we were ever to discover that the tendency of our present civilization to consider social values foremost was after all only a spiraling-back to the gregarious roots of our primitive past! There are moments, you know, when I truly believe that we're afraid to let go of each other long enough to discover what it would mean to be alone—to stand truly alone as individuals. A sense of our own inadequacy, our incompleteness, makes us shudder and draw back, glad to return and rub noses with the rest of the pack, in the warmth of a safe enclosure.

[1] E. C. Lindeman, *Social Discovery*, p. 70.

Dir. Modern currents still pull against such speculations. I wonder when they will turn. Just now, as you were suggesting that possibly our social primitiveness made us afraid to reach out toward true individuation, I recalled an almost obverse formulation of the matter by Dewey, in his *Democracy and Education.* If I can put my hands on it, I'd rather read it exactly than trust to my memory. Here it is: "From a social standpoint, dependence denotes a power rather than a weakness; it involves interdependence. There is always a danger that increased personal independence will decrease the social capacity of an individual. In making him more self-reliant it may make him more self-sufficient; it may lead to aloofness and indifference. It often makes an individual so insensitive in his relations to others as to develop an illusion of being really able to stand and act alone—an unnamed form of insanity which is responsible for a large part of the remediable suffering of the world." [1]

Soc. Yes, but interdependence ought ultimately to lead to greater differentiation and specialization of the parts, in the variation of individuals who make up the whole; it ought to lead not to a sacrifice, but to the true growth, of individuals. Have you a copy here of Trotter's *Instincts of the Herd?*

Dir. Yes.

Soc. Here's what I want: "I have pointed out elsewhere that the fundamental biological meaning of gregariousness is that it allows of an indefinite enlargement of the unit upon which the undifferentiated influence of natural selection is allowed to act, so that the individual merged in the larger unit is shielded from the immediate effects of natural selection and is exposed directly only to the special form of selection which obtains within the new unit.

[1] John Dewey, *Democracy and Education,* p. 52.

"There seems little doubt that this sheltering of the individual allows him to vary and to undergo modifications with a freedom which would have been dangerous to him as an isolated being, but is safe under these new conditions and valuable to the new unit of which he is now a part.

"In essence the significance of the passage from the solitary to the gregarious seems to be closely similar to that of the passage from the unicellular to the multicellular organism—an enlargement of the unit exposed to natural selection, a shielding of the individual cell from that pressure, an endowment of it with freedom to vary and specialize in safety." [1]

Dir. You're right. Much of the present social philosophy that wishes to sacrifice the individual to the good of the group is nothing but instinctive herd psychology, translated into modern terms.

Soc. Trotter and Freud are nearer the truth than Dewey when it comes to dealing with the relation of group and individual psychology. They know that at present individuals are pulled down to the lowest common denominator of groups or crowds, and that only more integrated individuals can hope to place group-life on a higher and less unconscious level. You get this straight from the shoulder when Dr. Hinkle writes: "For the human species, the individual is the important factor, the group serving him as a protection and aid; for all other forms of living creatures the individual is only an accident, and the race or the species is the important factor. Man has talked, to be sure, as if the race were paramount, but he actually lives for himself." [2]

Dir. I'm sure the world now needs more complete individuals so that group life can become integrated on a

[1] W. Trotter, *Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War*, p. 103.
[2] Beatrice M. Hinkle, *The Recreating of the Individual*, p. 107.

higher plane. Dewey places emphasis on the individual's living for the group rather than for himself and suggests that his failure to do so is the cause of much of the world's suffering. But to me it seems that the failure of the individual to know himself remains the cause of his ineffectual adaptation to a positive and adequate social existence.

Soc. There are moments for me of mingled joy and sadness when I look about me and realize the limitations of the science to which I have committed myself.

Dir. Now your voice suggests that sadness rather than joy is in the ascendant.

Soc. Yes, that's so.

Dir. Why?

Soc. Some might say I was just growing old and somewhat disillusioned. But I know it's more than that. There were years, it's true, in which the adventurous thrill of helping to disclose unexpected levels in the life of man made me disregard the difficulties and disappointments on the way. I saw myself then as midwife to a new civilization; I was helping to bring to birth this magnificent era of social science. But although the sciences of anthropology and sociology deal directly with man, they have not fulfilled their promise. I have seen them gradually shrivel and stultify the drama of the living past that our astounding discoveries of the ancient world revealed. Try, if you dare, to read the myriad volumes on African, Achaean, Babylonian, Egyptian, and Mayan excavations. Then tell me whether those desiccated tomes add one whit to an active realization of our unbroken connection with the heritage of those far-flung worlds.

Sometimes I am truly appalled at the dearth and destruction that man, robed in what ancient, sacred books call the garment of life, has sown and reaped. I stop and am afraid at the sound of my own glib words. Nowadays when

I hear my own voice expounding in the classroom, "The three formative factors of civilization are: one, the creativeness of the individual; two, psychological and sociological inertia; and three, the historic relations between groups"—why, I'm forced to "stop, look and listen" to myself. But it doesn't ring with the same conviction as before. Formerly I could hold forth endlessly on the importance of invention and creativity among individuals of a given society and believe every word I said. Now I see the grip of inertia, both sociological and psychological, as the dead hand that has slowed down all civilization. And as to that third element—culture-contacts derived through historic and physical relations of human groups—what matter now, as I see it, whether social and racial combinations beg, borrow, or invent the rudiments of their culture? It's all one in the end. For the bogey man of inertia gets them anyway.

Dir. So that's your view of the state of man! I'm with you on this curse of human inertia.

Soc. It's the merest luck or accident if man has ever in the past, or should ever again in the future, accomplish anything. He has an infinite amount of power and energy, more than enough to move worlds. But what happens to it all? He gets tied up with holding on to old habits and old institutions like grim death. A new invention or creation that grows up in any culture is merely a happy accident, like a seed that chances to sprout in fertile soil—nothing more, nothing less. Whatever of man's energy is not caught in maintaining ancient customs and traditions lies open to the impulses of herd suggestion in the rituals of war and religion. And if any of man's energy still remains unchanneled, there is always the chance for individuals to spend it in struggling against the fixed traditions of their social group.

Dir. You closed your lips at the end of that statement with an air of finality as though there could not possibly be a single drop of energy left after that for man to spend on another damn thing in this existence. But you did make one omission, just the same.

Soc. Well, what? Fire away. I suspect you're out to scalp me for insisting on taking mere man more seriously than he deserves.

Dir. No. Not quite that. Although I'm equally guilty of that mistake. But it seems to me that in describing man's ways of wasting his potential energy, you omitted the crucial one of personal conflict—man divided against himself.

Soc. Yes, I did, although we'd been talking about it just a few minutes ago in another context. But then there is yet another one we've both left out.

Dir. Well, what is it?

Soc. The fifth way of spilling energy, like your suggestion of wastage through conflict, is only attributable to man in a non-primitive cultural phase. We know that man has at all periods of his evolution held some particular attitude toward existence. He has clung to some philosophy of life that related him to his tribe or clan as well as to a vaster universe or cosmos. But such concepts, in primitive man, neither presupposed other world-views as possible nor needed justification in order to be allowed to continue to exist in their own right. And so aeons passed before man was forced to question his innate attitude by the impact of other races and other types than his own. He was then driven to cover in defense of his own personal cosmogony and private prejudices. Surplus energy was then quickly spent in rationalization and justification of his accidental existence and particular view of life. My friend Dr. Goldenweiser has said all this better than I can.

I have it here in my notebook to quote for tomorrow's lecture. Have you the patience to let me read it to you?

Dir. Yes, do. This interests me, too; for the ways in which energy is locked and thwarted in children is a matter of daily and immediate concern.

Soc. Well, here's what Goldenweiser writes in his *Early Civilization:* "Then when self-consciousness comes—and to many of us it never comes—we discover ourselves fitted out with all the paraphernalia of a world-view, with a code of morality, behavior and belief. Then we may indulge in a deliberate effort to change these ideas and attitudes or, more commonly, to provide for them an exculpating background of explanations and justifications. Many of our theories of education, or of criminology, or of etiquette, for example, consist of nothing but such accumulated afterthoughts invented with greater or less ingenuity to render our unconsciously acquired habits, attitudes and convictions more congenial to ourselves and better prepared to hold their own in the face of criticism or attack." [1]

Dir. Yes. We know that's so. And yet we go on talking just as though what we said was important. But I've had enough for today of the rationalization of our own little world-views. Haven't you?

Soc. Yes.

Dir. Well, then, let's have lunch.

[1] Alexander Goldenweiser, *Early Civilization,* p. 18.

Third Dialogue

The Artist and the Director

Artist. You have no regular morning assembly, when the entire school gets together, have you?

Director. No. I don't suppose you ever stopped to question these traditional school assemblies. Why they were there? What function they served?

Art. No, never until this moment. I just took it for granted that you started school with opening exercises, just as you bathe before dressing in the morning.

Dir. You accepted that in your childhood, evidently, more easily than other elements of your school life. For this morning as you wandered about the school, I noticed how it revived old memories of your own school days. You were constantly contrasting what you saw here with the way you had been treated in similar situations.

Art. Yes, but always with a sense of satisfaction, that here you were meeting real creative needs, for both the individual and the group. But I don't quite get the point of why there is no assembly. Don't you ever have the entire school meet all together?

Dir. Rarely, if ever, the school as a whole. Remember that our pupils range from a nursery group of two-year-olds to an upper high school. There are times when the three or four younger groups, with the exception of the nursery, gather for music and dancing, or a play in pan-

tomime of their own making. But they are never brought together to be talked to as a single group. Words shouldn't be used too much with little children. And if employed, they should be immediate and direct, spoken to a small group at a time, or perhaps individually to each child.

Art. I'm sure I agree with you about that, not only for children, but for adults, as well. Words spilled everywhere—but weighted with little sense or meaning.

Dir. In the middle and older classes more meetings do take place, but not at regular intervals, as a definite part of the school program. Each group works out its own way of holding class meetings. And when a class is prepared to give a play, a debate, or some special entertainment, it is free to invite whatever part of the school it wishes. But we ourselves have never encouraged the usual custom of large assembly meetings of the entire school at one time.

Art. Why not among the upper groups at least?

Dir. How did you feel about compulsory morning assemblies when you were at school?

Art. Not very differently from attending compulsory chapel at college.

Dir. (*smiling*). That's just about it. And the purpose of both, from the scholastic point of view, was just about the same.

Art. Yes, I see—a kind of wholesale spiritual, religious uplift point of view. Fifteen minutes a day to set the right standards and values toward life.

Dir. Yes. The conscious transformation of the morning chapel exercise into a "morning exercise" for social purposes was established by Colonel Parker over forty years ago in his now famous Cook County Normal School. And I'm not sure but that with some modification it's been the model ever since for the type and tone of morning assem-

blies in the more or less socialized schools of the country. And although the classes themselves take turns contributing elements from their own activities and work, the organization of these meetings is too arbitrarily regimented from above by the principal and teachers to justify their claims. I frankly don't feel such a vast difference between the old-time denominational school gatherings and nonsectarian public school assemblies, and these more recent socialized morning exercises.

Art. What you and I were subjected to in our youth never gave us a chance to do anything ourselves except sing the hymns and hear passages intoned from the Bible and perhaps some sort of moral talk besides. No friend of mine was ever interested or touched by these assemblies any more than I myself. Yes, I can see these social assemblies now as a residue of the compulsion to preach to children. But granted that's not the real way to get right values over to children, how then is it to be done? Where begin?

Dir. As an artist, that's one of your own chief concerns in life. Then, focus the experience of your own search here, right now! The problems, as I see it, are exactly alike.

Art. You mean the problem of spiritual, moral, and aesthetic values is just the same here, with these children, as in ourselves as adults?

Dir. I see it so.

Art. Then morning assemblies stand for a certain official attitude, like our own newspaper opinions, and so forth, against which the individual has to struggle to find his own true base, his own distinctive values?

Dir. That's the way you, as an artist, might phrase it.

Art. And you, as an educator?

Dir. Well, I'm particularly concerned at present with

what we as adults are ready to put forward to children as an authoritative point of view, of what we think and believe and live by. As adults we are within ourselves divided, uncertain, searching until death for values, and yet we are ready enough with our glib answers to ultimate questions when children seek us out. Instead of becoming humble, we turn arrogant when for an instant youngsters pull aside the veil with their essential questions.

Art. We are afraid ourselves when children confront us with the question of the meaning of life. Only yesterday my little nephew of five asked me, wide-eyed, about death. His favorite goldfish had died in his bowl. Why death? What was death? Must we all die? And then the sense of terror and rebellion swept him as he struggled to accept the possibility of death.

Dir. My little boy has also been going through that same opposition of life to death. He has worked out an equilibrium for himself between the movement of the two. Every time something or somebody dies, something else, he feels, comes to life. But he said the other day, "I wish there was something in the world that went on forever."

Art. My little nephew, also struck with the terror of personal death, turned to me for help.

Dir. What did you do about it?

Art. All I could do was to give him what I feel to be my own truth about life, that there is an essence, a living something in the world, everywhere, that never dies; that it is here before we are born, and here after that part of us we call our body dies. And we are just various forms of that essence moving in this world in these bodies.

Dir. How did he take that?

Art. He responded with a simplicity and directness that amazed me. A dog ran by us in the park at that moment,

and he pointed, saying, "That dog has essence." I said, "Yes." He added, "But it's a different shape from ours." He sat perfectly silent for a minute; then he spotted a pigeon and said, "That pigeon has essence, only it's smaller than ours." "Yes," I said again. He smiled, was satisfied and at peace, apparently untroubled since that day.

Dir. After his first contact with death, the perspective of the persistence of life has caught my little boy. He said to me, "You know, Life goes on like a moving train that never stops at any station." And then the vistas of generation and eternity seemed to open up to him as he described to me how his kitten would grow up and have kittens of her own, and those kittens would grow up and have kittens, and went on describing a succeeding and endless series of generations, with a sense of awe and wonder.

Art. It seems to me that a child's feeling for life in all its manifestations is far deeper and stronger than his destructive impulses.

Dir. Yes. That's where the terrible impasse of our civilization catches the adults, when children begin sincerely to question them. What can, what do, adults say, when children want answers not only to the problem of death and life, but as to why people kill each other? I don't suppose you can recall that moment of your own childhood. But it has always seemed to me that there was deep poignance in a child's normal resistance to accepting mutual destruction as the condition, if not the very nature, of man's life in the world.

Art. Yes, I do recall that. I remember what I passed through most vividly. At about seven, I became horror-struck at the way human beings were living at the expense of all the other animals in the world; how we ate chickens, sheep, calves, and ducks; how we imprisoned and con-

trolled cows and cats and dogs and donkeys and horses. I never dared breathe a word of my distress to a soul. The world seemed unaware or wished to ignore its cruelty. The only outward manifestation of my feeling occurred in my persistent refusal to go driving on the front seat of our old-fashioned carriage in the country. If I was expected to sit in front, as formerly, I would prefer to stay at home. In consequence my older sister was often obliged, to her annoyance, to take that front place. Only many years later did I get up the courage to tell her why I could not ride in the forward seat. It was horror at seeing a horse driven and controlled by a man. I dreamed at that time of a day when all horses would be free to roam the world at will. I had resolved to become a vegetarian as soon as I was old enough to direct my own life unmolested.

Dir. Yes, you've recalled what I meant—that crucial moment in your own life when the whole question of relative human values hit you hardest. It sometimes strikes deep even younger than seven. One child of five I know ran into the woods last spring and stopped short as he saw the first marigolds. "Mother, I won't pick the flowers. It would hurt them, wouldn't it?" When the mother tried to explain in the conventional way that flowers aren't like human beings, the boy, unconvinced, sensing what you and I might call the unity of life, refused his mother's explanation. With a ring of defiance in his voice, he swept her aside with, "You don't *know* how the flowers feel! You can't understand what they say to each other."

Art. What a difference between that straight talk of a child to his mother, growing out of his inmost feeling, and those countless admonitions of sentimental adults to children about loving the birds and the flowers.

Dir. Yes. This was genuine, real. That child, feeling

his bond with growing things, the way you did with animals.

Art. But then take it up the scale, when the child comes to facing what man does to man. How about that?

Dir. Yes, there's the cruel moment. Pathetic and sometimes tragic for the adults concerned. They are so helpless, so blind before the truth. Trapped in the meshes of this life, unable, usually, to admit it to themselves and so to their children. When a child first begins to question the sanctities of human values, whether it be private property, social distinctions, or control of human life, it is more than a single child trying to hold firm to his innate values. The drama is that of the adults as well. I see in it the tragedy of man. His struggle with his own soul unfolds there in the subsequent impact. When we humans are brought, by the stark search of a child's question, face to face with ourselves, we uncover, if we look within, deep and essential values that have lain dormant or have been denied. But usually we meet a child's unbiased quest with swift evasion and words that lie to our soul as well as to the child's. And soon, from repeated experience, children stop asking us fundamental questions. We meanwhile pluming ourselves on the success of our answers. "Children come," as Ferenczi has it, "to regard adults as dangerous fools, to whom one cannot tell the truth without running the risk of being punished for it, and whose inconsistencies and follies have therefore to be taken into consideration."

Art. Isn't the child like the artist at this point, in being against certain absolute and sometimes unreal or false standards in society? Both helpless and lost?

Dir. Not quite that. The child is in no sense opposing himself to society. He just begins to think and feel directly about the world that impinges on him. He is dis-

turbed, baffled, hurt by the contradictions he uncovers between the professions and the actions of man. The answers he gets to his questions don't explain; they try to justify. How are we to give a clear answer to a child when we are so tangled in this contradictory life of ours?

Art. Yes, how?

Dir. Certainly not by our make-believe replies.

Art. That's just the point.

Dir. I can make what I want to say clear and more detached if instead of citing any examples in my own experience I just pick up this volume of Sully's *Studies in Childhood* and read you some striking bits from it. You'll get a vivid and complete record of just this struggle of a child of five to comprehend why man relates himself to animals and men by destruction of their life. And what's more, you get the entire drama of adult and child in the answers of these parents. Their comments on their child's state of being sharply defines their own.

The first episode I'd like to cite is where the child sees a picture of a seal and asks, "What are seals killed for, Mamma?" He is told for skins and oil and then inquires, "Why do they kill stags? They don't want their skins, do they?" The mother answers, "No, they kill them because they like to chase them." And the child says, "Why don't policemen stop them?" The mother continues with "They can't do that, because people are allowed to kill them." And the child protests (loudly and passionately), "Allowed, allowed? People are not allowed to take other people and kill them." And here the mother slips in this complacent comment, without meeting the problem in the child's terms: "People think there is a difference between killing men and killing animals." She has implied, without daring to say it, that men believe in killing animals but not men. And so, rightly enough, the boy, described

as woebegone and piteous, answers with "You don't understand me," and then adds he would tell his friend the heathkeeper about these things.

And this was the father's comment: "There was something almost heartbreaking in that cry, 'You don't understand me.' How can we with minds blinded by our own conventional habits and prejudices, hope to catch the subtle and divine light reflected from the untarnished mirror of a child's mind?" [1]

Art. One might call that a nice, sentimental way of passing the buck.

Dir. Yes, the father, apparently shaken by the poignance of the child's appeal, protects himself from any serious re-examination of his own mind and society's values. For this could have led to but one conclusion, an admission to the child by his father that society was irrational and adults frailly human. But how would parental authority survive this penetrating and direct attack of childhood? No, it was easier for the father to sentimentalize about childhood's purity and regret with a certain self-pity the prejudices of society. A little later you see him making the same effortless adjustment to the child's passionate resistance to human destruction in war. The father's psychology is interesting. He is moved by the child's clear sense of values, and then, against his own essential response, he hides behind the conventional catchwords and safe phrases of the crowd.

When the child questions the right of men to kill living creatures, beginning with animals and proceeding logically to the killing of men by men in war, he forces both parents to do one of two things, either to admit the split in our own moral code between theory and practice, or to evade the truth by explanations that don't explain. We tend to

[1] P. 460.

forget, I think, how deeply and sincerely children accept and believe us when we claim to live by such precepts as "Love thy neighbor as thyself" and "Thou shalt not kill," and so forth. What a shock, then, it must be to a child, after being fed on such maxims, to be forced into abrupt acceptance of man's incessant destruction of man, as the normal concomitant of the world into which he is born. His mother had suggested a distinction between killing animals and men. She implied that men did not believe in killing men. The steps by which he is introduced to the inevitable set of men against men, and his own inner struggle against admitting it, are poignantly pictured in his play with some lead soldiers. He had broken off their guns. And then, Sully writes, "His mother now asked him why he had broken them off. He replied, 'Oh, that was when I didn't know what soldiers were for, when I thought they were just naughty men who liked to kill people.' "[1]

Art. That was for a moment the child's genuine reaction to the killing, without adult rationalization, wasn't it?

Dir. Yes. Then the mother asked him what he now thought soldiers were for, and he explained, "Oh, when some people want to do harm to some other people, when those other people must send their soldiers to fight them, to stop them from doing harm."

The father's comment on this episode was just this, "But already the boy's wrestlings of spirit with the dreadful 'must' which turns men into killers, were proving too much for his strength. He was learning, sullenly enough, to adjust his eyes to the inevitable realities."[2]

Within himself adult man knows no more than a child why he does and says and believes in these contradictory

[1] Pp. 475-476.
[2] *Ibid.*

codes. He has only succeeded in building barriers that are thick enough to keep the conflicting attitudes more or less successfully apart one from the other. But I believe a deep shock comes to a child in his first realization that the adult world is on false foundations. Grown-ups, he discovers, say one thing and believe or do another.

Art. Why, yes. One of the terrific experiences of my life was to be accused of conscious lying, at seven years of age, by my mother. Up to that time I may have pretended and made fantastic explanations and excuses as children do when they are very young, but that was the moment that brought me to my senses. My mother claimed she warned me not to wear some new clothes on a rough drive. When I came back with the new suit mud-spattered, she scolded and told me I had worn it against her orders. I looked up surprised and insisted I had not heard her ask me not to wear it. She answered me angrily, saying I was lying. I looked at my mother with a sense of horror and realization. I had a sense of being affronted, insulted at the suggestion that I had lied or that there was anything that could make me feel lying was desirable. Don't misunderstand me. There was no priggish attitude about right and wrong, truth and untruth in me at the moment. This was just an inner sense of revulsion within my whole being. Why, it suddenly struck me, she must lie herself all the time, since she believes I lie when it never entered my head to do it! And the whole world must lie also. Maybe it does! How terrible! And from that day my mother became alien. She was my enemy. I was innocent. She didn't believe me. It was she and all the world who lied. I must learn to defend myself. And I did. I started to learn to lie, to defend what I felt was the truth for me, but would be misunderstood by my mother, by the world. As far as I can recall, it was the

beginning of the development of that overdefensive attitude that has been predominant in me ever since.

Dir. That's the kind of experience I meant.

Art. What a terrible commentary on our civilization these inner childhood experiences really are! They are usually passed by, ignored. But what a picture of our own so-called successful education or adaptation they reveal. We wouldn't need any Bertrand Russells or Romain Rollands crying in the wilderness if we could only recall or retain that crucial flash when every one of us knew for himself inner values that were true and sustained them, if only for a moment, against the outer world.

Dir. But hasn't man's tragedy been the same throughout the ages? Knowing more deeply than he could be.

Art. I suppose so. It only becomes a little more blatant in this age of public education and social propaganda.

Dir. The tragedy of man is deeper and more irretrievable than any of these social panaceas can reach.

Art. I've been terribly shaken by the way you've made me see the birth of these false values in those early gropings and seekings of that child for the verification of his own truth. I have always known these things in myself and for myself. But it's very different to feel it all universalized in the drama of each new being. Tell me, what can be done about it? Are we all damned before we're born?

Dir. Sometimes it seems so, doesn't it?

Art. But you couldn't be a teacher if you believed only that.

Dir. No. I guess the answer is that I was forced back to this, as the only way out. The only hope in the dark.

Art. How is it possible to sustain true values and hold standards pure in children in this kind of world, with this kind of school? Tell me that.

Dir. Every day I become more convinced that most of the so-called problems of education are due to the unnatural conditions in which we live, and most particularly to those in which children are obliged to grow up nowadays.

Art. Do you mean especially in cities?

Dir. The difficulties I refer to are undoubtedly more acute there. But what I mean includes all of our modern civilization, with its worship of efficiency and speeding-up at the expense of real living. Plenty of adults fail to make a satisfactory adjustment to these conditions and always suffer in their struggle against the limits of time imposed on their activities.

Art. Yes, it's as though there were two currents in man's existence. A deep, riverlike flow that, in a less complicated existence, would naturally find and cut the channel of its own stream. Then there are cross currents. These interfere and interrupt the flow of the main stream.

Dir. The time-clock is the slave-driver of this generation. The whole world rushes and hustles as though time were an absolute.

Art. Do you know, it is interesting to realize how simply and completely the drama of the relativity of time is played out for us each year under the title of "Daylight Saving."

Dir. Yes, like a lot of sheep, people accept without a question the arbitrary transformation of clock time with a simple twist of watch-hands back and forth an hour, according to the sequence of spring and autumn seasons.

Art. How utterly unaware people are of their complete mastery and control by time!

Dir. If they realized it, we wouldn't be living in this kind of a commercial age. Then they couldn't be doing what they do, the way they do it.

Art. That's true enough.

Dir. But there are any number of people not living *in* this world as it is constituted, even though they are forced, due to the accident of birth, to *exist* here now, as best they can. What I'm leading up to is this: there are some adults, at least, incapable of taking time too seriously. They know it has no absolute reality. Well, all children live in such a world, where time is not real. But joy, sorrow, love, work, and play are real to them. And it's always seemed to me that this power of adults to defeat and deflect the flow of a child's activity by irrelevant and unreal time standards makes them suspect in the eyes of children. Can't you see how a series of daily orders, "Hurry and get dressed for school," "Wash your hands for lunch," "Pick up your toys and get ready for bed," become a series of interruptions to a child's day in an adult time-conditioned world?

Art. Yes, but how alleviate this conflict between the natural flow of a child's own life and the necessities of an adult environment? It is so similar to the orientation of any creator to this modern world that I am doubly interested in your answer.

Dir. It is difficult, isn't it? Perhaps I ought to have said, first of all, that, in spite of what I'm now telling you, I do, nevertheless, accept the necessity of building up a certain definite form of life for children, in which regular physical habits of daily routine are taken for granted. For a child as well as an adult can achieve no state of inner liberation for creative activity if his energies are not freed from over-attention to routine by firmly established habits of order and organization. A certain amount of it is necessary to all human adjustment. But beyond this necessary minimum the majority of human lives move, slaves to this over-organization of existence.

Art. It seems to me if you weren't one of that grown-up minority who had realized and opposed this slavery in your own life, you wouldn't be so aware of it in the life of children.

Dir. I suppose so. Still, it's so obvious at every moment for those with enough detachment to stand off and see how a child's day is interrupted by a series of delegated tasks and arbitrarily imposed activities.

Art. But many would say that this organization of existence into regulated periods of labor and relaxation is *the reality* of life. And that a child must be trained, first and foremost, to meet this as reality.

Dir. Yes, I know. Reality is then that nuclear design of dogma and custom that it suits some adults to accept and authorize.

Art. These, then, are set up as a norm to which childhood should conform.

Dir. Yes, it's often quite as arbitrary as that, I think. How, then, are we to overcome the disadvantages of this modern world?

Art. You're not one of those optimistic educators, then, who feel that in the new education lies the hope of the race?

Dir. Not, as you realize by this time, in the commonly accepted sense. I have no feeling of satisfaction in the improvement and superiority of modern education over that of the past. But I do believe we've been fooling ourselves too long about our modern advantages over the past. I wonder seriously whether we haven't lost more than we've gained. Don't misunderstand me. I have no sentimental yearning for a return to nature. I'm not hankering after an irrevocable past. I only feel we must face a deteriorated present, in order to do something about it.

Art. You don't allow the present any advantage over the past?

Dir. Materially, certainly. Humanly, I question it. The majority of people today have now more money with less labor. Increased physical comfort with less effort. Swifter means of transportation with less purpose, and, of course, much more canned food, canned philosophy, and canned music. With the natural consequence that they have less digestion, less thought, and less taste than any previous generation.

Art. Yes. We have accumulated a bewildering array of material possessions and cultivated a taste for myriads of unnecessary luxuries. But for what? Something—the inner meaning of life—is always missing. But we go spinning along, not knowing what it is we lack. And before this mad swirl that sweeps us on to collecting and owning more and more things one is individually as helpless as a zephyr in the path of a tornado.

Dir. Our sense of values is upside down. That's what makes you and other creators feel yourselves queer and separate from the world as a whole. Art has become extraneous, special, apart from life.

Art. That's so. It becomes important, to most men, only after they have made their fortunes in the world.

Dir. Yes. Then, as a final means of expressing power, they try to control creation by paying for the work of others. Only after it's too late do they try to capture by proxy that element too long absent from their daily living.

Art. A part of every one of us knows that art and creation should be the normal and natural function of us all. Not the peculiar privilege and special function of a few, discounted yet envied by our civilization as a whole.

Dir. But in our attempt to recapture art as our birth-

right, what strange and stupid things we do to it and ourselves. In a primitive civilization art is simply a part of life. Clothes, utensils, shelter, are made for use according to available material. Form and variation in color and decoration follow spontaneously. Just as song and dance grow from worship and celebration, the life of primitive man, with true and instinctive roots in its own soil, buds and blossoms according to the nature of its seed, while we, torn away from our rightful earth, spend years seeking in vain to compensate for our loss.

Art. Yes, I saw just what you describe imaged so clearly last week in that drama or rather melodrama of the natural forces of life in the jungles of Siam, the movie called "Chang." Did you see it?

Dir. No. Tell me about it.

Art. Well, in the midst of the mêlée of life-forces thrown upon the screen, man, no less than lions, leopards, elephants, and serpents, plays his equally inevitable and significant rôle. The early life of man in a family group is placed against a back-drop of tropical jungles. The simplicity and beauty of the life is clear. The rhythmic cycle of the days and years and weeks contains the epic of a man and woman with their children and their animals, sufficient and self-contained. The movement of the picture carries one through a life-cycle of primitive man, from the cutting of the timber for his hut, through the tilling of the soil, the harvest, and the care and protection of his sheep and dogs, his monkeys and his goats—man placed clearly in the scale of nature, himself forever at the mercy of the elements and the marauding of wild beasts. Animals and man are on equal terms in the cosmic scheme of either eating or being eaten.

Dir. How that picture heightens the contrast between man's primitive life and our own today!

Art. Yes. And the contrast was bitten into my mind in a curious way. I was sitting in the darkness of the theater, entranced with the serious beauty of the scenes; I was lost in the lovely movements of the woman's slender and well-poised body as she swung the rough-hewn wooden thresher back and forth for her agile boy to catch the beaten grain in the curve of a deep bowl. The bodily forms of these primitives, their pure and joyous movements, and the simple completeness of their lives, all held me bound in wonder. Of a sudden across my mood there broke the twangy voice of a middle-class and very idle woman. "What a life!" she exclaimed. "Nothing to do then but get food and shelter!"

Dir. That's almost too pat a commentary to my remarks on modern civilization.

Art. I know how it made me feel. My mood of exultation was splintered, and I wanted to wring that female's neck. It was all I could do to restrain myself from asking her whether she really felt that playing bridge was an improvement on slaying leopards to pass away an idle afternoon.

Dir. What a separation between the immediate demands of nature that complete the life of primitive man and our own existence, which suffers from lack of any such deep necessity!

Art. Instead, we spend our forces elaborating details and inventing luxuries. And that's about where art comes in today, if at all, on the extreme periphery of our passage through this world. It's just a "fanciness," to adopt a very satisfactory word just coined by a five-year-old friend of mine, not a function.

Dir. In early cultures, art grew out of everyday existence, a natural expansion of living. That's what we've lost altogether nowadays.

Art. And how can we get it back so that art becomes once again an organic necessity?

Dir. Certainly not with our art museums and schools for the teaching of art.

Art. Of course not. Nothing is more hopeless than that. But ours is an age in which art has no reality, no meaning, no function. Can we, I wonder, ever recapture it?

Dir. Since art, as you so clearly understand, lacks any genuine place in our own society, any attempts to introduce it educationally are sure to be half-hearted and apologetic. There must always be an excuse, a reason for bringing art into life, and therefore into education, today. It is never there naturally of itself, you see.

Art. No. The people who run things in the world only buy art when they get rich. And those who create starve until they lose their nerve.

Dir. The artist, I feel, is never sufficiently related to the practical life of the modern world to turn its tide. If he's ever to do so, he would have to help us transform existence through our schools. For the trouble with most of our educators, even in the modern schools, is that they hold, like the rest of the modern world, a false conception of the place and function of art in life. Nowadays art needs forever to be justified. If no longer the religious, then the social or moral justification is substituted.

Art. But what need is there of justifying art in terms other than itself?

Dir. That may seem right and true to you and a handful of others. What most of the world believes nowadays, and educators in particular, is that art must be justified by a purpose. And that purpose should be preferably a social or a moral one.

Art. Oh, yes, a generation or two ago the moral motive in training was uppermost. I remember seeing some of my

mother's and grandmother's school primers and picture books. Always illustrating some homely maxim or pious fable.

Dir. But it's the social, not the moral, motive that justifies art in education nowadays. Go and visit a few of our schools and see for yourself.

Art. I know that's so. But surely one reason for unsatisfactory art teaching is the dearth of real creators to direct it. Isn't that so?

Dir. Decidedly. The majority of men and women who drop into the teaching of art are those who have failed to put themselves over as artists, or who know too little of creation to be teaching others. We try to overcome that difficulty by inviting originators in various arts, whose own work is vital and sympathetic, to come in and work with classes in this school. We do this not only in the arts of music and sculpture, but in literature and social science as well. An outstanding modern composer, a prominent professor of history, and one of anthropology have all tried out experiments, with our co-operation, in presenting their material here in such a way as to train children for independent and original work of their own. It goes without saying that this involved the older groups. I mentioned subjects other than art because I wanted to bring out a certain unity of purpose that runs through the teaching of the school. Every subject must be taught as freshly and as creatively as the so-called arts. For all good teaching is creative, and demands an artist.

Art. I don't suppose you have much time to do any teaching yourself in the school at the present time?

Dir. Not so much as in the past when the school consisted of only a few groups. There is more to do now in helping teachers to develop a right approach, and also in getting the parents truly related to their own chil-

dren and to their own important part in the development of such a school.

I still hesitate to call what I did with the children teaching. It was, to be more exact, being taught by the activity of the youngsters themselves. At any rate, I did, for the early years of the school, take charge of entire groups. But when I was no longer able to do that, I still kept in close touch with what was going on, and I continued to take a major part in evolving a special school organization to make possible both individual and group expression. Always I wanted to find means of making life fulfill its creative promise. That is why I went back to the beginnings of early childhood. Creation, it seemed to me, should be the natural way of man. And yet on every side I saw nothing but a travesty of such a dream.

Art. How, in the arts, do the teachers go about getting the children to express themselves and acquire the necessary technique for the work they do?

Dir. Your question is too special for the kind of answer that I think you really want. For first of all, from our point of view, the problem of how to approach creative teaching is in general principles the same, whatever the subject; and secondly, there is very slight differentiation into separate subject teaching for any of the younger classes. There the group teacher must be depended on to encourage and develop all the creative activities and interests, whether in art, dramatics, arithmetic, carpentry, or any other subject.

Art. Then won't you go ahead and give me more of your point of view on this creative teaching in general?

Dir. Gladly. To continue, then, where I left off. In the younger groups the teacher's job is primarily to establish the right attitude of doing and being in his or her groups, in both individual and group orientation. For

young children need help in crystallizing impulse into manifest and concrete expression. The younger the children, the more careful and hesitant we are to impose or suggest too complex or too perfect standards of workmanship or technique. Our demands should grow more exacting with the growth of the children.

Art. The best teachers, I venture from my own experience, are just those who know when and how much to suggest in the way of technique and standards.

Dir. Yes. But there is nothing more difficult to develop in teachers than the power to hold hands off, when necessary, and yet remain active, observant, and responsive to all the interests and needs of their class.

Art. But even that capacity in a teacher doesn't necessarily make a group active and creative of themselves, does it?

Dir. Oh, no. Of course not that alone. I'm taking for granted now, as we talk, that a fresh type of modern school environment and organization is included in the picture, since you have gone through the school today and seen its setting for yourself.

Art. That's right. Don't let's spend any time on the milieu of such a school. That I accept as right and desirable. I just want to understand more clearly how the teacher uses it to help the children grow.

Dir. But to do that we have to get behind the children again to the teachers.

Art. I think I'm ready now to formulate the problem in general terms, for I've come to see that the first thing to be done is to overcome the uncreative quality of most teachers, and not just the lifelessness of teachers in the arts. But why has that taken so long? Where does the greatest difficulty lie?

Dir. I think in the almost impossible task of living down our own peculiarly arid and mechanical education.

Art. You mean most of us remain bound to our moralistic and sociological views of art and life?

Dir. Yes. And in the ordinary schools they have no wish to overcome these false attitudes.

Art. But for your kind of avowedly creative school, you surely select your teachers in a different way from the others?

Dir. Yes, we do. But that is not so simple as you might expect offhand. For this kind of school demands so much more of its teachers than those which rely on formal discipline and organization.

Art. I can well see that. But at the same time a creative individual who came into such an environment as this could get as much for his own growth as he gave in his teaching.

Dir. That's true enough. But just consider for a moment how difficult the adjustment to this type of school really is, however creative and original teachers may be. They have all been subjected to a more or less conventional upbringing in the past. If they are in this school it certainly means that they are dissatisfied with the old forms and desirous of doing something different. And it also means that they have a thorough grounding in the materials and techniques available in traditional education, but that they propose to harness this knowledge to a new purpose.

Art. And when you define this purpose . . .

Dir. Ah, there's the rub! For you and I are caught like all the rest who are seeking new values.

Art. You mean we aren't free to oppose new standards to the old, of which we are a product and of which we contain the effects?

Dir. Yes. You may tell me it's an exciting age to be alive in, but I say it's no easy time to have to chart a way. The old foundations have collapsed. What sure base have we left on which to build for the future? For you as an artist, just as for us as teachers, there must be a shifting of values and rediscovery of direction.

Art. You mean the problem of creation in the art of all teaching depends on the right placement of our values, as to the past as well as the present.

Dir. Yes, just that. The greatest difficulty in such a school, I find, is to bring teachers to a realization of the austerity and inner discipline necessary to creative work of any kind, and most particularly to the development of their own teaching in relation to the learning and doing of their classes. Having rebelled against the unreal discipline of old methods, they have often not found themselves harmoniously related to the new. For as you are so well aware in your own work, creative expression demands simultaneously emotional release and intelligent control of power. And the majority of teachers enthusiastic over creative possibilities in the new education tend to exaggerate the aspect of self-expression and forget that in full creation significant standards must also be maintained. Then overwillingness to discount standards of perfection for mere creative impulse may be due sometimes to a lack of personal experience and training in the technique of any art or to insufficient cultural background with which to recreate a subject in fresh terms; or an even subtler, but no less far-reaching, element may be missing. I refer to that instinctive niceness of taste by which alone true standards in workmanship and creation can be upheld.

Art. I begin to see now what you mean. How there is a possible danger that teachers in a modern school may in their classes encourage too indiscriminately creation for its

own sake, without considering standards to which such work should be related.

Dir. Sensing the right moment to do or not to do is essential to creative teaching. But a person has to be well oriented, clear in himself, to measure the needs of his pupils. That's why it becomes important, in developing our teachers, to prevent them from rejecting too completely their own background and tradition, in straining to reach out after different and less restricted methods for the future.

Art. Very likely the impulse to chuck the past carries many teachers to an overvaluation of all attempts at creation in the present.

Dir. Yes. There are more eager teachers with an enthusiastic and fresh response to life, ready to topple tradition in helping children to find themselves, than mature ones ready to respect the past for what it is really worth, and at the same time to use it consciously and intelligently as a bridge to further development.

Art. Of course that would be so. It's so much easier to go against than to assimilate and go beyond a thing.

Dir. And although you haven't asked me, I want to tell you that in spite of all my enthusiasm for the modern experimental schools, there's this one point where I'm afraid they don't realize how they diminish their potential strength by a too complete denial of those values still rooted in the groundwork of our past. Most educators are so intent on gathering up and whipping into shape each successive throng of fresh and recalcitrant children, to meet what the world likes to call the facts of life, that no time remains to consider what the facts in a child's world really are. I know how strong has grown the tendency nowadays, while affirming the need of creation in modern education, to add, "But it must be related to life.

Not too much moonshine. There is danger in allowing a child to live in an imaginary world. He will lose contact with reality. His imagination should be trained, not by being fed on myths and fairy tales, but on stories of real heroes and leaders of manhood; by trips out into the channels of city life, by explorations of the countryside, by experiments in the laboratories of science." And to all this I more than assent.

Art. But it's not enough?

Dir. Exactly. The fairy tales and the make-believe are an important part of a child's world as well as of a grown-up's. I can't agree with those educators who, absorbed in what they call a scientific point of view, are fearful lest a child be swung away from reality by the play of his imagination. Scientific data from the outer world, creative imagination from within, are equally normal and necessary to growth.

Art. Fantasy run riot is a sick thing, and may produce in adults an art that is also sick.

Dir. Of course, it comes from abnormal development. But what has that to do with children in this school?

Art. Well, don't people constantly inquire as to where this kind of creative work will lead children?

Dir. Yes. And what I say is that when we help our children to a wider and more varied contact with the activities of this external world than do the majority of schools, we give them a keel against tipping too far into the world of imagination and fantasy.

Art. Without powerful creative imagination, significant art is impossible. All creation, after all, depends on the strength and reality of that inner world, to children as well as grown-ups. And how rarely is that pure and nascent imagination given the proper sustenance to carry forward to maturity in a world beyond itself!

Dir. I wonder whether you know much of those educators who insist that a child's creativity be strictly limited to reproductions of the outer world?

Art. Do you mean photographically representative art?

Dir. Well, they don't call it that. But they will have none of a child's exuberant and playful imaginings.

Art. To my mind they're barking up the wrong tree. The risk is not that a child won't make a boat that looks like a real boat, but that all too soon his only purpose, after gaining greater control of his crayon and paints, will be to obtain verisimilitude in his products. Excellent, I agree, to win mastery of any medium. If it is copying, though, don't let them call it art. It may even be perfect data for scientific notebooks, but that doesn't interest me. But please go ahead and forgive my explosive interruption. You caught me on a sore point.

Dir. Yes, I understand. But to get back to our friend the educator who corrects the boy who prefers to paint lions purple and hydrangeas black. Gently but firmly such a teacher suggests that the child go back to the garden and the zoo, to verify the colors of the flora and fauna of his work of art. But I have become convinced that children make paintings and change the color of natural objects on purpose to suit their taste of the moment. Only educators lacking aesthetic response could ignore the genuine and spontaneous interest of children in making such experiments in the juxtaposition of form and color within the variation of their designs.

Art. It seems to me there are two kinds of reality to be dealt with, and education mixes them up. There is the reality of objects to be grasped through seeing, and children, I know, follow that passionately for its own sake. But then there is this other reality, and that they also feel and know. For children the world of creation is alive and

real. It is only, as you've suggested, that for incompetent teachers there is no serious work of the imagination. Tell me now, when do you find this interest in color relations and pure design develops? In early childhood?

Dir. Much sooner than I had been led to expect before I tried out my own experiments. You know the traditional view is that children's art, like that of primitive man, is absorbed in crude attempts to tell a story by means of pictures. Well, that's sometimes true. But side by side with that impulse to dramatize is a deep interest in color and form brought together in design for its own sake.

Art. I believe you're right. No strong impulses and needs of maturity spring suddenly to life. They must grow gradually from previous manifestations. I never before thought of tracing interest in color and design back to its source. But primitive man exhibits those same elements in the decoration of his pottery, his war-trappings and religious ritual. Doesn't he?

Dir. Yes, of course. Just the same as a child when given half a chance. But our life of exteriorized action registers in our school rooms only the concrete and realistic productions of art, and tends to discount any other latent expression. If children as young as four or five are encouraged to pursue their interest in the use of paper, paints, and crayons, and are not constantly under a teacher's suggestion of what not to make, some unexpected results are sure to follow. Children become interested in experimenting with what are at first casual and accidental loops and lines scattered across a page. As control of the pencil steadies, there emerge opportunities for fresh invention through filling in these outline forms with crayon strokes in solid color. Soon other attempts are made by the youngsters to vary these patterns and improve the placement of tones. Trial and error lead to new experiments. Some child

may discover the infinite possibilities of using crayons by spot rather than by line-stroke technique. The result, as I have sometimes seen, may become a series of subtle variations on a dotted theme. Perhaps this new method of dotting intrigues another or maybe half a dozen of the class. If it does, they do not copy each other in slavish imitation, but they try it out, if it suits their purpose.

Art. Just like a group of artists whose proximity may influence each other's technique. That's a good point.

Dir. As you see, it's a case of technique growing out of experiment, quite as with adults. I was so intent on the youngsters that I'm afraid I failed to mention how the teacher relates herself to their first crude attempts in expression. She never teaches art as such. But her attitude of sympathetic encouragement and understanding is essential to the continuation and development of these earliest efforts. Response to pure design is so faltering, so uncertain, in most people, that they simply cannot believe that it is still native to young children. I found this out for myself, living in close contact with numbers of them in the first years of the school.

Art. But why, then, does the impulse of young children to enjoy design for its own sake come to light so seldom?

Dir. Because, I think, most adults fail to respond to and encourage it.

Art. I'm interested to know whether you found response to pure design always prior to pictorial representation.

Dir. Not necessarily. Though as a rule, if children were given the opportunity as young as three or four to use crayons freely, they were apt to become absorbed in the possible interplay of form and color. But a child by the age of five or six is far more intent on the concrete dramatization of life, and is then apparently more capable

of reproducing it in pictures than is one of only three or four.

Many times, visitors to the school were surprised at these abstract designs that you've just seen. It was unexpected. They were not used to seeing such work in other schools. Often they would go up to a very small child, who wasn't even aware of being noticed, and ask, "Is that an ocean you're making?" pointing at the same time to a series of horizontal, wavy lines he was drawing. The child would stare at the visitor who had interrupted his work, say "Yes" to quiet the foolish grown-up, and go back to the serious business of completing the ripply pattern with which he was forming his central design.

Another type of child, asked by an inquiring visitor, "What is that picture about, dear?" would answer, "Can't you see it's a duck going down a road?" Although he had explained to the class teacher a moment before that he was "just trying to make a beautiful design." It's perfectly possible that playing with colored crayons and paper leads some casual strokes to suggest definite and concrete pictures to a child. But with careful observation, I have more frequently caught an adult suggesting to a youngster what these youthful drawings should or did appear to be. I was asked so often whether I had not suggested that our boys and girls make these abstract designs.

Art. Had you ever?

Dir. No, quite the opposite. I was more surprised than any outsider when I first began to see a fundamental response to design for its own sake in such tiny tots. Several years later I was able to compare notes with certain artists who saw our children's work. And they had had an experience identical with mine in encouraging their own children and those of their friends to draw. The first products were bold and flaring designs, no representation at all.

Art. Before I ever came here to visit this school, some painter friends of mine told me that the work of your children had that very freshness of pure design which all our best modern painters are seeking. I didn't believe them. But now I feel just as they did, before these fearless and untrammeled constructions of pure color. Do you know, I just remembered that Roger Fry in his volume, *Transformations,* draws attention to the same two fundamental elements in significant art that you find nascent even in tiny children. He thinks that the highest form of painting would contain a perfect fusion of what he calls "representational" art or the art of illustration, and the art of "plastic volumes."

Dir. Yes, both are there, in earliest childhood, but evidently partially split into more or less separate paths, until controlled later as expressional forms.

Art. What happens to the work of these children as they get older?

Dir. Well, it follows these two paths we've already noted in the younger ones. But as their sense of color, line, and form grows and fuses, it is applied to every type of creative work that follows. For instance, their sense of design and form finds immediate application to stage productions, interior decoration, dressmaking, printing, lettering and binding of books, or the creation of jewelry, woodcarvings, embroideries. And every other possible art and craft may at some time or other be developed. In the meanwhile you would see that the individual work grows less and less abstract as the activities of the external world impinge on them. Every child is allowed considerable latitude, up to the time of adolescence, in his selection of the several arts he will pursue.

Art. You said until the time of adolescence. And then what change occurs? I ask that particularly because I re-

member Cizek spoke of adolescence or just beyond as the point at which he stopped his children's art classes in Vienna.

Dir. Yes, I know. I was interested also in his statements that it was useless to try to teach them after about fourteen. Of course, I can well imagine what he was up against. It's undoubtedly the crucial moment, the turning-point in the lives of most children, determining which way their energies will move throughout life. And I'd agree that after sufficient experiment, those who showed no artistic trends should reduce the time spent in such pursuits. For there are too many vital and passionately absorbing things in this world for every type of human being. And it ought to be the obligation of any school that pretends to take its responsibility seriously to help children to discover their own true direction.

Art. That ought to be so, I agree.

Dir. To get back to what happens at adolescence. Here in this school there is of necessity a shifting of children into greater specialization. Selection must take place and more time be given to fewer subjects, if we wish to avoid superficial smattering in the arts and keep up to standard in the general school studies.

Art. Yes, I see that. I've wondered how you manage to get in as much of the arts as you do, with the maintenance of all the usual school requirements.

Dir. It's not easy.

Art. But weren't you disappointed that Cizek stopped his art teaching with children before they reached maturity?

Dir. Yes. I feel the real test of any training comes later, when children have succeeded in overcoming the difficulties of adolescence.

Art. But so far there haven't been many such tests of

students completed in modern educational experiments, have there?

Dir. No, there hasn't been enough time yet for the few such schools there are to show their results. And then, unfortunately, many educators like Cizek have only worked out their free methods for younger groups. Most of them have been unwilling or unable to carry them past the adolescent period. And no wonder. That is the difficult moment. Just then the outer world begins to loom up with standards that in certain ways may challenge those of a carefully selected school environment.

Art. How, especially?

Dir. Well, at adolescence the impulse to "go regular" and be just like the other fellow grows very strong. And it is sometimes very difficult to prevent children at that time from just falling into line with the world as do boys and girls in more formal schools, just from fear of being different from the crowd.

Art. And of course to accept creative activity as a normal human function to be developed in schools is still contrary to the world's expectation.

Dir. Just so. The difficulty of sustaining creative expression at and through adolescence is enormous. One of the greatest responsibilities of our new schools. I remember an experience of my own with a class several years ago that clarified the problem for me. It might interest you, too.

Art. Yes. Do tell me.

Dir. I took a class of boys and girls of about thirteen for their work in English one season. They were an unusually gifted and intelligent group. I had worked with them a number of times in previous years. They were well ahead in general studies. I knew them as trained to a fine sense of craft and able to work hard and well in such arts as painting, modeling, and dancing. Their English, according

to conventional school standards, would have been considered competent. But we realized this group had a latent creative capacity for both poetry and prose. And we knew that once articulate, their form of written expression would be comparable to their work in the other arts.

So I stepped in to try my hand. And at once I hit a snag. It was no easy moment for my entrance. The group were in that unstable and touchy state of adolescence, swinging swiftly from hypersensitive withdrawal to an exaggerated self-assurance. Their teachers had allowed them to run along too casually in their personal writing. The best use had not been made of their potentialities. They were not caring about their own work, nor were they making any effort to write up to genuine standards. They were for the moment satisfied with work just good enough to get them by.

In order to shock them into a realization of the wider possibilities of their own writing, and also to get a line on their individual tastes, I started reading with them through a wide range of literature. I remember, just offhand, reading the Bible, Benvenuto Cellini, some Elizabethan plays and lyrics, parts of Blake, Whitman, Poe, Melville, Kipling, and bits from many recent poets and prose writers. And this reading included as many selections as the children themselves cared to make. For the moment there was no homogeneity in the tastes and interests of this group. There were several boys interested in biography and historical tales, and willing to endure poetry only in the shape of romantic ballads. Other boys wholly absorbed in scientific experiment and research chose to relate their reading to those subjects, unless they turned for comic relief to Sunday supplements and the writing of limericks.

The girls held themselves more shyly separate. There

were several already aglow with that tender radiance of unfulfilled daydreams. Once protected from the rude onslaught of literal-minded boys, they were eager and ready to sing of their own fragile visions. Others, more apart and lonely, taken unawares by their swift maturing, were at a loss to deal with their new, strange voices, unsteady feelings, and unaccustomed gestures. Such boys and girls had to be given courage to use their scarce-awakened being in the effort and adventure of winning creation from their opening lives.

I saw that for the time being the opposing interests in the class interfered with unifying the work for them as a mass. So I decided to break the group up into sub-sections, to have direct conferences with these smaller units, and to eliminate the general meetings of the class as a whole.

In order to get authentic writing from this class, it was first necessary to convince them that mere inspiration was not the one and only source of prose or poetry. You've no idea how they resisted the conception that great writing did not appear perfect and full-grown, without struggle and experiment on the part of poets and prosemen.

Art. That surprises me, since you say that they understood and submitted willingly to that continuous effort and revision in their work in the other arts.

Dir. Yes, that's so. And the reason is not so far to seek. I found they had never been helped to a sense of genuine standards and values in writing. They had read a great deal and responded eagerly to a wide range of poetry and prose. When younger, they had written both easily and spontaneously. But now, beyond that first immediate, childlike satisfaction in expression, they had reached that most difficult moment in adolescence when critical awareness outstrips the power to do.

Art. And how did you swing them past their skepticism

of technique and make them ready to discipline themselves for their writing?

Dir. I naturally turned to the parallels of their experience in painting. I reminded them of their readiness to make endless experiments with colors for exact tones and structural balance. I tried to show them that words were truly the pigments of their prose and poetry and must needs be picked as carefully for their exact and proper use. They soon dropped their cant of "inspiration" and were mightily intrigued with experiments in sketching daily episodes, intimate moods, etc. Their resistance to my expectations of their conscious efforts lessened as they themselves became convinced and impressed with the change in the texture and quality of their own writing. And finally, after some thrilling adventures into the realms of Roget's *Thesaurus*, and further explorations of those inexhaustible stores of their own being, the day was won, in that group, for writing as an art instead of an accidental inspiration.

Art. Your original difficulty, there, had been the lack of just the right teacher to bridge the gap at a crucial moment in that class? Wasn't it?

Dir. Yes, in a sense. But don't forget what I told you about before, how difficult, if not impossible, it is to find or even to develop teachers who hold just that balance between expression that is genuine, and technique that is control. In English it's especially true.

Art. Of course, I know myself there's no field with more cut-and-dried teaching. After all, you're up against the super-difficulty of discovering teachers of English who are creative artists themselves.

Dir. Yes. Nothing less gives them the power to transmit to children a just sense of the incessant effort and self-

discipline necessary to achieve mastery of words and structural form.

Art. Such control, you mean, as will carry them to surer domination of their own efforts at expression.

Dir. Of course.

Art. But how many artists today have that themselves?

Dir. Then you begin to realize just how difficult it really is to find or develop adequate teachers for this kind of school?

Art. I do now.

Dir. Finally I want to read you what Whitehead has written on the "sense of style" in his *Organization of Thought.* To me it's the most satisfactory statement I know of the proper relation between serious standards of value, real work, and the object to be attained. He's discussing the problem of combining general training with special studies, and says, "Finally there should grow the most austere of all mental qualities, I mean the sense for style. It is an aesthetic sense, based on admiration for the direct attainment of a foreseen end, simply and without waste. Style in art, style in literature, style in science, style in logic, style in practical execution, have fundamentally the same aesthetic qualities; namely, attainment and restraint. The love of a subject in itself and for itself, when it is not the sleepy pleasure of pacing a mental quarter-deck, is the love of style as manifest in that study.

"Here we are brought back to the position from which we started—the utility of education. Style, in its finest sense, is the last acquirement of the educated mind; it is also the most useful. It pervades the whole being. The administrator with a sense for style hates waste; the engineer with a sense for style, economizes his material; the artisan with a sense for style, prefers good work. Style is the ultimate morality of mind."

Whitehead speaks of power beyond style: "Style is the fashioning of power, the restraining of power. But, after all, the power of attainment of the desired end is fundamental. . . . Where, then, does style help? In this, with style the end is attained without side issues, without undesirable inflammations. With style you attain your end and nothing but your end. . . . Style is the exclusive privilege of the expert. Who ever heard of the style of an amateur bowler, of the style of an amateur poet? Style is always the product of specialist study, the peculiar contribution of specialism to culture."

Art. That couldn't be better. I see clearly now the outcome of our talk. The possible risks of amateur methods in creative teaching. You're after style too, the maturity of the expert, in these new teachers of your modern school.

Dir. Yes. Nothing less will do than genuine creators striving, at least, for perfection.

Fourth Dialogue

Two Normal Students and the Director

1st Student. We've just spent our morning going through the school. It has given us some fresh hope as to what we may be able to do in education when we've finished our training course.

2nd Student. Oh, yes, it's been really stimulating! But now we're both anxious to ask questions about what we've seen. You couldn't possibly give us any time to talk over a few points?

Director. I could right now. I'll be delighted if I can tell you what you want to know. Won't you come into my office, where we shan't be disturbed?

1st Stu. We wanted to question class teachers about the work as we went about the school. But the children seemed to have so many matters of special interest to talk over after each class that we hesitated to take much of any teacher's time.

2nd Stu. There was one thing we agreed on in the course of the morning: that this school is not like the other modern ones we've visited.

Dir. And have you decided how it differs?

1st Stu. Well, its general spirit and type of activity are different. But it's very difficult to analyze offhand just what there is in the school's approach and organization to

encourage such spontaneity and freedom among so many children all within an ordered plan.

Dir. Don't be afraid to commit yourself. Tell me as frankly as possible exactly how the school strikes you. From that I can go ahead and explain how it is organized and our reasons for this particular school scheme. It is probably far more carefully planned than your first impression of its free activity might suggest.

1st Stu. To be, then, as concrete as possible: the children here have impressed me as being somehow both *more social* and *more individual,* at one and the same time, than in other schools. And I can't quite decide how it comes about.

Dir. I'm pleased to hear you say just that. You've hit the nail on the head. You've noticed what the school is consciously striving for: to bring about a simultaneous expansion within the group-life as a whole and within the personal existence of each child. And this attitude has determined the form and organization of the school at every step.

1st Stu. It was such a relief this morning, as we wandered from studio to classroom or laboratory, to see some of the new ideas in education really being put into practice.

2nd Stu. What she means is that we're sick and tired of being fed so much on the theory of new education in our courses at the university, and then to see so little of it put into actual use anywhere. When the time comes to do our practice teaching, it's a sad business. Always excuses why one can't expect to change school procedure too suddenly, if we become impatient at repeating formal methods.

1st Stu. Yes. The work is all so cut and dried. You

simply despair of ever getting an opportunity to do something creative in education.

Dir. I know just what you mean. I've been through it. You have my sympathy. And, do you know, I find that there are any number of eager young teachers like you two, hungry for the freer developments in education if they can only find the opening. But tell me, before we go back to talk of this school, at what age children interest you most? For that would suggest the classes you plan to teach.

Both Stu. Oh, the younger ones.

Dir. And why?

1st Stu. Mainly because one can make a fresh start with little children.

2nd Stu. (*interrupting*). And the powers that be are less likely to bind you to any fixed grade requirements in the lower classes.

Dir. Yes, I think you're both right. As things stand today, it's only in the lower grades and kindergarten groups that the teachers' training schools, or even most of our so-called modern schools, attempt any serious re-adaptation of the curriculum to the psychological needs of their children. In the older classes, it seems, educators are afraid to touch the root of the problem at all. So, to cover their timidity, they give much time to modifying the content of each subject, and more attention to improving the methods by which it is taught.

1st Stu. Yes, I've often been overwhelmed by the amount of teaching technique that's imposed on us, and then in contrast to that, the slight consideration given to fundamental human and spiritual values on which to build.

2nd Stu. Still, it *is* true that there has been one great transformation in the schools of this last generation. I

mean the general agreement among intelligent educators, whether conservative or more advanced, to get away from the classification of isolated school subjects for the sole purpose of memory training or collecting information. And now there is this serious attempt to socialize school work, by relating all studies to the community life. Don't you think we've at least begun, in this generation, to educate our children more genuinely for the rôle of "citizenship"?

Dir. Yes, the word "citizenship" is attached to the slogan of every educational institution nowadays. But to what extent have you *seen* this changed aspect in our schools, and to what extent have you merely *heard* it described in lectures?

1st Stu. It's true, as I was saying before, they do say a lot of things in our courses that no one gets a chance to put into practice.

2nd Stu. But then, there has been the application of the Project Method in the schools.

Dir. Yes, there has. And I should like to ask you both, since you're so genuinely interested in modern education, to tell me what *you* think of the Project Method.

2nd Stu. Why, what is there to think about it? Isn't it, after all, the most advanced and most hopeful method of transforming the rigidity of the old type of school? It puts all the emphasis on school subjects that are correlated to some real social interest of the children. And that is the best way of organizing a school for the good of the community, as well as for the growth of the children. Don't you think so?

Dir. I asked you that question just to see whether you would give an answer straight from your lecture courses. And you did. But what I'd really like to have would be your own answer, based on your visits to various schools

and your personal experience with children. No wonder, though, that you were surprised when I questioned you as to your opinion of the Project Method. For I realize that in these days if one is interested in modern education, there is supposed, in the training schools, to be *nothing* beyond the Project Method. But outside, in the new schools, many other things have begun to happen. And by your enthusiastic response to what you saw this morning I could tell that some of this fresh life has affected you. But I asked my question to see whether you were aware of the distinction between social education carried on by the Project Method and rather different approaches now being used in some of the more experimental schools.

2nd Stu. No, I'm afraid I didn't realize the distinction. I feel as though after you'd made the point clear to me, I'd have to revisit this school soon again. It will give new significance to what I see, though I'm not sure that I agree with you.

1st Stu. Well, I was quite conscious of a difference in the social organization of activities in this school and the others I'd seen. And I'd like to know how you succeed in making the group work and play of these children grow more directly from their own interests and less from the teacher's suggestion than in the other schools I've visited, which were all based on the Project Method.

Dir. Now you've asked me something that'll take a while to answer. I can't do it in just a few words, because it's not a mere matter of educational technique. It means explaining the reasons behind our methods. So a real answer to your question would begin to suggest an entire philosophy of education. I'll have to go back as far as Rousseau, Pestalozzi, and Froebel for a moment. My only reason is to set them as a point of reference to our present-day attitude on individual and social education. Rousseau,

although the source of our modern ideas on education, did not relinquish the aristocratic relation of private tutor and privileged pupil when he promulgated his ideal scheme of education in *Emile*. It was about fifty years later that Pestalozzi, moved by the conditions of the neglected children of the poor, first formulated the conception of education as an inalienable right of all. And how he worked to put it into practice in his own school! Froebel then made his appeal to parents and others without book knowledge, declaring that all those who had true sympathy and understanding for children could lead and teach them. It's difficult, isn't it, to imagine that the type of group-life Froebel organized in his school could have been eyed askance by the German government as dangerously socialistic?

2nd Stu. With our own experience of the aridity of the Froebelian kindergartens in America, it's almost impossible to realize that Froebel not only said children's activities should be related to the doing of real things in group- and family-life, but that he actually brought it about. I'm so used to thinking of the formal kindergarten as a place where they prefer make-believe rabbits and flowers and sunshine to the real thing, that it's difficult to remember that Froebel had a genuine barnyard and real craftsmen to direct the work of the older children of his school.

1st Stu. Yes, but I shall never forgive him for having made me spend a year of my childhood pasting ugly red and blue and green paper triangles in hideous patterns, and sticking dried peas on the ends of toothpicks to make houses and fences. Think of the thousands of other children who must have been subjected to the same humiliation of those gifts and occupations. It's too absurd!

Dir. We could easily go on talking of Froebel's absurdities, his sentimentalities and remote philosophical abstractions, though I think they've been accentuated by stupid

and worshiping disciples. But it *was* he who put his weight on the undeveloped *inner* power of children, and insisted on their capacity for self-activity. He was far from putting it completely into practice. But then, so are we today. My chief interest in Froebel, however, is as an influential predecessor of John Dewey. Dewey acknowledges his debt. But it is altogether on the side of social development in education, in recapitulation of the race experience for the individual, never on that of inner individual expansion, that Dewey grounds himself in Froebel. I've just been reading his *School and Society,* and two things in it strike me particularly. Listen to this: "It is through occupations determined by this environment that mankind has made its historical and political progress. It is through these occupations that the intellectual and emotional interpretation of nature has been developed. It is through what we do in and with the world that we read its meaning and measure its value.

"In educational terms, this means that these occupations in the school shall not be mere practical devices or modes of routine employment, the gaining of better technical skill as cooks, seamstresses, or carpenters, but active centers of scientific insight into natural materials and processes, points of departure whence children shall be led out into a realization of the historic development of man."

Then Dewey goes into an explanation of how certain materials are used in his school as centers for such scientific insight. From this he generalizes on the social conception. He continues: "But if we look at it from another side, we find that this work gives the point of departure from which the child can trace and follow the progress of mankind in history, getting an insight also into the materials used and the mechanical principles involved. In con-

nection with these occupations the historical development of man is recapitulated."

And so, when he sums up his point of view, "You can concentrate the history of all mankind into the evolution of the flax, cotton, and wool fibers into clothing," we have a very clear suggestion, I think, of the way that the acceptance of Dewey's social approach to education has broken up the former method of organizing a conventional school program around the three R's and the old-time history and geography lessons.

2nd Stu. Dewey has made his point of view so convincing that I don't see how any serious teacher today could accept the old method of pigeonholing school subjects. How *could* any one nowadays teach arithmetic out of a dead textbook, without making problems of number live in the daily interests of her class of children!

1st Stu. You really make me smile. You know as well as I do that the majority of teachers haven't begun to catch up with Dewey. You seem to forget all those lifeless public school classes we've visited together, where nothing but spelling drills, arithmetic tests, and standard geography questions and answers were ground out wholesale. Don't let your personal enthusiasm for the socialization of our schools make you ignore the depressing truth.

Dir. Now you've brought us back to that all-absorbing question of socialization in the schools. I've still a lot to say about what I think it is and should be. But before that, won't you tell me what you think of this passage I just read from Dewey?

2nd Stu. I think I see why you read us just what you did. There is in it a complete summary of all the chief ideas on which the Project Method is based. "Occupations," using the same term as Froebel, is what Dewey

calls those schemes of educational activity planned around some scientific life-interest. And now, in the more recent terminology, we know these "occupation schemes" as "projects."

Dir. That's right. You've caught my point.

1st Stu. But what about Dewey's method of putting these occupation schemes into practice when he had a school?

Dir. I wish I had seen that school of his at the University of Chicago. Of course one can draw pretty clear inferences from what he has written and what he has left unsaid, but it was some unpublished notebooks on the activities of the school that Dewey showed me some years ago which first gave me a definite conception of his methods. In them I saw brief reports made at regular intervals through the year by various class teachers on the development of subject matter around such social projects as were selected for the year's work. Included in these records were descriptions of special things done or made in each class as a part of the term's requirement. Whatever the children studied, made, or did was noted in this record by the class teachers. Of course, the general organization of work in this school, to include primitive and home life as the chief centers of interest, has been written up at length by Dewey and his followers. But what concerned me was an examination of these teachers' records, of work accomplished by classes from one school term to another. I was surprised to find how regularly all the schemes of making and doing were set beforehand. For instance, if the processes of preparing wool were the topic, every child concluded his work with either the making of a small rug or the weaving of a large one in collaboration with his class. And if the central topic in a young class was the life of the cave-dwellers, then at a certain point in the

activities all the art work consisted of the elaboration of the life of primitive man.

2nd Stu. I'm a little puzzled as to the point you're making, perhaps because I've accepted Dewey's view of education so whole-heartedly.

1st Stu. I think I see. Dewey's advance was to break up the old type of hard-and-fast subject-matter program of the formal school. The Project Method has been an outcome of his scheme of centers of interest for socializing and concretizing the school curriculum. But in Dewey's own teachers' records you saw the tendency to emphasize a uniform product in groups at a given period of organized work.

Dir. Exactly that. The work was arranged in fresh terms around genuine interest and activities that cut across the former theoretical divisions of subject matter. But the making and doing of things was always subordinated to a social plan, not related to the individual capacities and tastes of the children. This was striking in the records of creative work. For apparently the art of any group was limited to a suggested social subject. (I know there isn't time today to go into that very important question as to whether art can be treated adequately as merely a social by-product of a scheme of education. Personally I doubt it.) The second point that stood out in these records was the constant repetition of the same product by all children of a given group, whether they made churns or looms, or paintings of Eskimo life. The work seemed as determined for group and individual activities from the standpoint of the teacher as it is in Project Method schemes today. I get the impression that neither individual nor group entities initiated much in the way of original planning, however much they may have expanded and adapted the social projects suggested by the teacher.

2nd Stu. But in the way the work was carried on there must have been a sort of freedom and spontaneity unheard of at that time in other schools.

Dir. Oh, yes, of course. And if you ever saw the old clippings from the Chicago papers at the time! Horror-struck at children who talked and laughed and moved about schoolrooms doing things instead of remaining silent at desks that were nailed to the floor.

2nd Stu. And surely the constant encouragement of children to work through direct effort with real experiences involved attention to individual development.

Dir. Why, yes, I'm convinced that the children in that school had a much more fundamental and individual growth than had been possible in any schools up to that time. But that's not what I mean. I'm taking for granted with you now the value of all the positive things that Dewey did to transform the old pedagogy. But his influence went deeper in transforming the formal school curriculum than in forwarding the independent development and activity of the children themselves.

1st Stu. I've never heard that distinction made nor thought about it myself before.

Dir. It's not by mere chance that this is so. Can't you see why Dewey should have avoided the problem of dealing further with individual development?

2nd Stu. Perhaps because he was absorbed in his efforts to place a new valuation on the social side of education.

Dir. Partly that, I think. But deeper still, it coincides with his entire philosophy and temperament. Dewey is very chary of the inner, the subjective life, at any time. And just today I came across this (*opening a copy of* Experience and Nature). It gives his interpretation of the genesis of the objective and subjective attitude in human beings: "Things are *first acted toward*, suffered; and it is

for the things themselves as they are followed up, to tell by their own traits whether they are 'subjective' or 'objective.' These terms, like physical and psychical, express classifications, discriminations, and there is no presumption of primacy on the side of the subjective. As a matter of historic fact, the primitive bias of man is all toward objective classification." I wonder how that strikes you. Do you agree with me, I wonder, in interpreting the development of man in the light of the new analytic psychology as more deeply subjective, or at least co-ordinately subjective and objective?

1st Stu. I know very little about this new psychology. But I do know that *I feel* that both sides of possible development, the subjective and objective, must naturally exist in all human beings as soon as they are born into this world.

Dir. Fine! And after all, I'm convinced that one's feeling, one's general attitude, as well as one's mind, dependent as they are on type, temperament, and environment, are the cause of his particular philosophy. And Dewey, I think, has made that so patent in his statement on the place of emotion in education that I copied this down out of his *Pedagogic Creed*, written many years ago. Here we have the real reason, I think, why he never gave more attention to individual development: "I believe that the emotions are the reflex of actions. I believe that to endeavor to stimulate or arouse the emotions apart from their corresponding activities is to introduce an unhealthy and morbid state of mind. I believe that if you can secure right habits of action and thought, with reference to the good, the true, and the beautiful, the emotions will for the most part take care of themselves. I believe that next to deadness and dullness, formalism and routine, our education is threatened with no greater evil than sentimentalism.

I believe that this sentimentalism is the necessary result of the attempt to divorce feeling from action."

1st Stu. I remember, that comes from an old pamphlet of Dewey's, distributed years ago to public school teachers.

Dir. Yes. When Dewey says here that emotions are the reflex of actions, he is nearly right. Nobody can but agree with Dewey and the behaviorists as if it were so. But how about the effect of emotion on action? Emotion does not apparently take care of itself in our human lives. Dewey suggests that if right habits of action could be developed, the emotions would take care of themselves. Is it because no such perfectly right habits have ever been established that emotions have to take care of themselves? But there is implicit in this what he directly states in later books, that the objective (the non-emotional) is prior to the subjective (the emotional).

But from our point of view there must be a recognition of the subjective inner life, of feeling as coexistent with and coessential to our life of action, before education can orient individual children to a fundamental social adaptation.

2nd Stu. Won't you expand what you've said? The point interests me, but it astonishes me.

Dir. Tell me, do you feel convinced with Dewey that action is prior to emotion? Never emotion prior to action, never the subjective prior to the objective?

2nd Stu. I don't know. I never looked at it in those terms before.

1st Stu. Well, I don't. It seems to me they are both in every one. And who has found a satisfactory way of testing the priority of either?

Dir. That's the way I see it, too. Feeling and activity seem to exist in a child from the moment of birth, if not

before. They are two coexistent facts of one life. In normal development they should exist side by side as two modes of the life-force. I can't see why a balanced and harmonious educational training should ever call forth feeling at the sacrifice of action or action at the cost of feeling. They should enhance each other's power by mutual interaction. Feeling should be a mainspring to action, and action should relate to feeling. Any splitting of these two functions in an individual would lead to a disastrous state of dissociation or disharmony. On that we as educators are agreed. But as to the rôle of the emotional life of the child in his harmonious adaptation to society—that brings us back to the point I made about Dewey's underestimation of human feeling in education.

As I see it, unless the growth of the inner life of feeling is nurtured as carefully as that of exterior social action, children cannot function harmoniously in the social life of either childhood or maturity.

1st Stu. You seem to ascribe the same weight to individual and social development, letting them feed each other reciprocally?

Dir. Yes, it comes to that. But I feel that our entire generation is obsessed with the urge to socialize the world by compulsion—an excessive pressure from without, because we all lack the faith of inner purpose. In the schools; too, I find that the first concern is not with human beings, but with producing a particular type of society. This mistaken emphasis springs, as I see it, from a diminution of proportionate weight on the inner, the spiritual, value of each separate life, and an exaggeration of the value of the external products of herd existence.

1st Stu. In past civilizations the emphasis has often been more positively on spiritual values than it is today.

Dir. Yes. But never has the inner, the emotional, life of

the individual, except in the name of religious instruction, been of serious educational concern. It looks to me as though the world has always been afraid to come to grips with this explosive emotional force. Our defensive Puritan morality has not been without effect in discounting the value of emotional expression in education. And as we have failed to tend and nourish the personal, inner life of individual children, so their life in groups cannot fail to be cramped and unbalanced. If we could only hold in mind that the emotional and the social life are not isolated, but constantly blending, acting and reacting on each other like two currents in a single stream!

2nd Stu. What did you mean when you spoke of the life of feeling and acting functioning not merely from birth, but possibly before?

Dir. As I see it, there is in each child a life-force, a potential power, an essential urge. Before birth, during intrauterine existence, it is already an active force capable of moving and feeling. Always it is part of a universe. It exists in realms beyond itself, in a world that is capable of affecting it just as it can rouse and move this world. Within this conformation of a universe and a newborn self lies the theater for the interplay of our myriad-patterned feelings, thoughts, and actions yet to be.

Before birth the world of a child is within the mother's womb. After birth this dependence on the mother remains long relatively undiminished. Slowly, the outer world begins to impinge. Step by step an infant's life expands to include a father, brothers, sisters, grandparents, a nurse, or other household intimates. And in this sense, a child already needs, in the earliest phase of life, to make adjustment between himself and the world outside. There are then these two poles of force in every life—the ego and the world.

But always this existence consists of a double rhythm, a swing of energy out toward the world and a pull back from the world to the ego again. And this double movement of force manifests as both emotion and action. It is as capable of originating as activity and being transferred into feeling as it is of commencing with emotion and turning back into movement.

1st Stu. But the behaviorists are all for ignoring the movement from inner feeling to outer action.

Dir. Yes, and the psychoanalysts tend to ignore the translation of muscular contraction and expansion into emotional states. So I find myself unable to agree wholly either with Dewey and the behaviorists, who see all emotional or psychic states as entirely explicable by conditions of environment, or with the analysts, who translate all physical symptoms into terms of psychic or emotional states. Both seem right part of the time. But I see the human mechanism as far more complex and unique than either of these groups of psychologists are willing to admit.

1st Stu. In what way do you mean?

Dir. You see, as I understand it, our own bodies as mechanisms are equally capable of transforming our life-forces from an emotional energy into physical action, or vice versa, from muscular movement into emotional states. To me these conditions are different manifestations of a single force. And however we attempt to decide whether muscle contraction precedes emotion or feeling precedes gesture, we shall ultimately always fail to track an emotion or a movement to its source.

1st Stu. Why?

Dir. Because our estimate of which is cause and which is effect does not depend on whether an emotion is caused by a particular bodily tension, nor on whether bodily con-

traction or illness is due to emotional stress, but it hinges entirely on the particular point, in a long series of causes and effects, on which we choose to take our stand. For in an interlocking chain of physical and psychological events causes become effects, and effects causes. Who then has sufficient knowledge to determine the first cause of feeling-states in the chemistry of the emotions, or the first cause of contractive activities in the mechanics of the body? The most we can do is to observe this movement back and forth in the relation of human organisms to the world.

1st Stu. Wouldn't you say that the differentiation in pattern of human reaction was a matter of personality?

Dir. Yes, either personality or type. A difference evident already in infancy to those who are aware of the subtle variation in the emotional and physical response of babies. The hope of education in the future depends on a deeper penetration of this problem of type. Until we truly comprehend the fundamental difference in psychic mechanisms between the jolly, outgoing, sociable child and the acutely reticent, over-moody one, we can't help them educationally to fulfill their own potentialities or to overcome their psychic difficulties.

1st Stu. You think that is the chief problem of education?

Dir. I certainly do. What can be the use of presenting any amount of subject matter, however well organized according to modern teaching methods, if the children's inner lives are not moving so as to allow the maximum of interest or attention?

2nd Stu. If that's true, it makes me feel pretty discouraged about the long time spent in my normal courses on methods of teaching and the slight attention given to the interior mechanisms of child psychology.

Dir. I think you should feel discouraged. I certainly do. But what's more serious is the entire lack of awareness, in almost all schools, of the crucial problem of individual adjustments.

1st Stu. How about the psychological testing now in general use for unusual and normal children?

Dir. Most educators, it seems to me, are far too satisfied with the limited generalization of these mental and motor tests to look beyond them.

Perhaps this begins to suggest to you, with what you have noticed in visiting the groups this morning, that there is a need of an absolutely new technique of education, first in dealing with individual adjustments for each child, and then with the group activity. It requires a different psychological approach in the teachers and a complete reorganization of school programs, as well as a change in the mechanics of school procedure.

2nd Stu. Would you, before we go, give us a little clearer sense of how you relate the particular type of social activity in this school to individual orientation?

Dir. Yes, that's too important to leave unresolved. It is, in fact, the point from which we started when you asked about the distinction between this school and those carried on by the Project Method. We seem to have gone a long way round to get back to this original question. But it needed all this talk to explain our methods of developing group-life. For to us, groups, like individuals, have an inner psychic life and a special outer form of their own. Every group has, so to speak, a unique personality, made up of the complex factors of whatever individuals compose it. If that is true, then the mechanical similarity of classes in most schools has nothing to do with genuine group or social life. It's the variation of types and temperaments within each social unit that gives it color and

form. Shall we then discount the value to society of this variation by insisting on uniformity in our school groups? If not, then the same kind of care and attention we advocate for the individual child must be devoted to the combined life of a group of children, as it also passes through its phases of physical, emotional, and intellectual adaptation. For the life of a group, as well as that of each separate child therein, promises a unique configuration, which only waits upon the right nurture, the just environment, and the proper time to be fulfilled.

You may be surprised when I refer to groups living as organisms capable of expanding into their own physical and spiritual form. I know that nothing of this kind has ever been glimpsed in the traditional schools. The only analogies I can give you to clarify my meaning are in the fields of art and science. There Jules Romains and others have created in literature an aesthetic of group-life under the title of "Unanism" in which the combined existence of a group, instead of separated individuals, becomes the core of their art-form. So too has Whitehead, the mathematician, formulated a philosophy of "Organism" which posits group entities as centers of organic being.

In spite of the increasing attempts of schools to crowd children into fixed forms, two groups never are, nor could they be, identical, since they are the sum total of an irreproducible combination of individuals, who fuse but once, at a given time and place. If there was a whole morning ahead of us, I'd like to tell you more of how the sense of the dynamics of such a group is essential to a new educational technique. I have records that show the evolution of a class in its own group expansion over a period of years. And the method necessary for teachers dealing with such a socialization of group-life from within is far more complex than that of the Project Method.

2nd Stu. I see at last the distinction you make. Socialization by the Project Method is foreplanned, around a central scheme. You don't develop your social life from outside, but work to encourage an interior social growth from within every class, varying according to its particular make-up.

Dir. You've got hold of the idea now. The advocates of the Project Method are not so much concerned with the unexpected and unforeseen potentialities of this interior group expansion, this growth of being.

1st Stu. I have often heard students and professors at the university refer to this school for its special handling of individual children. They've said nothing of your social approach.

Dir. No. Shall I tell you why?

1st Stu. Do.

Dir. They come down here and are disturbed by our emphasis on the detailed study of the emotional life of each child. And because we don't go through the process of socialization by their kind of prearranged plan, they imagine we neglect the social aspect of education altogether. And the truth is that we trust the innate social instincts of children so profoundly that we find it unnecessary to force socialization from above.

1st Stu. But very small children aren't naturally social. They grab and take and pull, don't they?

Dir. Yes. A child has at first a powerful and passionate urge to satisfy its immediate and impulsive needs. But in the right nursery-group environment this very current, normally self-seeking, breaks against a world of similar entities. If the conditions of group-life are consciously planned and the teacher knows just how to hold back or redirect the energies of the youngsters, it is possible for children as young as two or three to be thrust into con-

ditions of daily life where the need and desire for playful co-operation creates the beginning of an organic group. It often comes about in this way. The self-interest of two or three children moving toward a common purpose, say in block building, plunges them into sudden undesigned contact; their need for each other in their play scheme is for the time being greater than the compulsion to grab blocks and build alone. Isn't that temporary subordination of self-interest to the sharing of a common aim the best that we ever achieve in adult social life? That's why I feel that we haven't yet realized the possibilities of using this natural inner growth of social life among children as a means to a more profound approach to their education.

2nd Stu. But you see this growth of interior group-life as related always to individual development?

Dir. Of course. Individuals and their group are completely interdependent. One cannot, except theoretically, consider an individual apart from some social milieu or group. And the group is surely nothing but the transient pattern of some combination of individuals at a given time and place, so that although at moments, for the purpose of analysis, we may consider these two factors as temporarily separate, they are in fact the dual aspects of all existence. There is no life without the reciprocal interaction of the self and the related group or world.

1st Stu. That's a simple way of explaining in a phrase the lifelessness of most schools.

Dir. I think so. They never think in these terms at all. What I see as the real function of a school is to create the most complete condition possible for this twofold rhythm of group and individual life to develop into a truly social form. For without the expansion of many-sided individuals there can be no vital and varied social group. And without constant deepening of a complex group-life, there can be no complete individuals.

Fifth Dialogue

The School Psychologist and A Mother and Father Discuss Intelligence and Other Tests

Psychologist. Did you ask for this appointment to talk over the psychological reports you've just received from the school about your children?

Father. Not just that. We're not going to waste your time trying to enlarge on any of the virtues of our children that your report has omitted, as I'm sure some parents do. No, quite the contrary. You've made such a complete psychological study and accurate estimate of both the girl and the boy, that we have no personal points to discuss. We'd like to ask you, though, about the exact methods used in making these records and tests in the school reports.

Mother. We're so glad, you see, that our children don't have to go to a school where they're subject to those stupid monthly examinations and reports that we suffered. Do you know, as a small child I knew well enough that those report cards of A's, B's, and C's depended on the personal bias or prejudice of teachers. And from school days on through college, I remained sensitive to the discrepancy between what I really knew and what I could produce to order for examination papers.

Psych. In the last decade, since the use of psychological

tests has become general, there's been quite a shift of opinion among educators as to the value of the old type of examinations.

Fath. But isn't the use of these psychological tests just as limiting?

Psych. I think so. But my point is that they are more accurate and less subject to personal prejudice than those former personal estimates of classroom teachers. And if the rigid system of public school gradings and markings is to remain in force, intelligence tests and the recently devised subject-matter tests are certainly more accurate.

Fath. Has there been any careful comparison of the ratings derived through the old and the new methods?

Psych. Yes. Some large-scale experiments have been made. I have in mind one in which some teachers, heads of mathematics, history and science departments of Mid-western public schools, were asked to correct series of high-school papers, each in his own subject. Over a hundred teachers corrected the same sets of papers, and the grading estimates varied from 90 to 30 per cent. But with the introduction of standardized subject-matter tests, in which the various processes were scientifically analyzed, estimates of this same group of students by different people showed only slight variation, whoever gave the tests.

Fath. How amusing to picture that our great systems of national education, bent on maintaining a dead level of uniformity for every grade throughout the country, are defeated not only by the variability of the pupils, but by the inability of our public school teachers to grade identically!

Psych. In the good old days such discrepancy in marks was possible owing to the personal equation. But today the Public School and many other institutes of learning

are avidly seizing the intelligence and subject-matter tests as a more perfect means to regiment children than the old-fashioned methods of the past.

Fath. Do you think that there is much to be said in their favor?

Psych. Well, it depends on the angle from which you regard the problem. If from the point of view of testing more accurately what the child has mastered in the regular school curriculum, certainly the modern subject-matter tests are more exact. And what's more, they undoubtedly do, by their careful analysis of phases of the learning process, help teachers to discover the weak and the strong points in the work of their pupils. For instance, in the report we sent you about your little girl's studies, do you remember we explained that her difficulty in learning to read rapidly was due to her confusion in distinguishing between "B's" and "D's" on the printed page?

Moth. Yes. Was it also by the same subject-matter tests that you gave us your report on John's special difficulty in arithmetic?

Psych. Yes. We found that it was in the special process of subtraction that all his mistakes arose.

Fath. But these particular tests were devised for the purpose of checking accurately the grade requirements of formal schools, weren't they?

Psych. Yes, but they've done more than that. They have helped us revise our conceptions of the standards of work formerly required in every subject in various grades. But the attempt to evolve a series of adequate tests of subject-matter ability at various age levels remains as yet in a nebulous state.

Fath. Now you're coming closer to what I most wished to talk to you about. Just how much value do you attach

to the measurements of intelligence derived from these psychological tests, since you use them for the children of this school?

Psych. Certainly, we use them. But without that air of ultimate seriousness and finality current among intelligence testers as a class.

Fath. Just what importance do you, as compared to most schools, attach to them? And how far do they succeed, and where do you think they fail to fulfill what is claimed for them?

Psych. In answering you, I suppose I may assume that you're both quite familiar with the principle on which the intelligence tests are constructed.

Fath. I am, from a rather practical experience. You see, I had a good deal to do with the army method of testing during the war.

Moth. But I have had no experience with these tests. Will you just tell me, before you go on, what is meant by "mental age" and "real age" that one hears of so often in the lingo of the intelligence testers?

Psych. These intelligence tests now used on normal children were first evolved by Binet to separate the normal from the abnormal in the French schools. Then, as now, the stumbling-block was a standard or comprehensive definition of intelligence, by which to classify children of varying capacity. Binet got around the problem by a means of measuring the differences—the variations—between children. The emphasis was not on the types of the children in themselves, but on how they fluctuated from the normal standard. A so-called ideal average child for each age was created.

Moth. And how exactly did Binet obtain this standard for his normal child?

Psych. That's the whole story of the making of the Binet tests. To summarize his method, he decided that the standard of a normal child of any particular age consisted of what an arbitrary percentage of children of that age could do.

Fath. And he decided to call "normal" just those abilities that 65 to 75 per cent. of the children of a particular age could show, in response to a certain number of chosen problems and questions.

Psych. Yes. The tests grew out of responses to arbitrarily selected material, supposed to uncover innate capacity, not acquired knowledge.

Fath. And they were based originally on the testing of only 200 French school children.

Moth. And so this "mental age" for any child consisted of—?

Psych. Well, Binet died while he was still working on these tests. And what one always hears spoken of as the Stanford Revision of the Binet Tests was made at Leland Stanford under the direction of Professor Terman. From his further experiments and modifications of these tests on a large number of children, the Binet tests for intelligence were established on what is today accepted as a workable method for this purpose. It would take too long to go into the method of revision used to discover innate capacity at each age. But the problems are so arranged that the correct answer to a question counted two months toward the mental age of a child. So, if a youngster of five can answer all the questions allotted to his age, he is said to test at age, and his intelligence quotient is 100 per cent. If he answers one or more questions in the age group above his years, he will register some definite percentage higher than 100. And these mathematical estimates are arrived

at by dividing this mental age by his real or physical age, the "mental age" being the average performance of a child with these arbitrary problems.

Fath. And then the resultant, the product of this calculation, is called the Intelligence Quotient or the I.Q.

Psych. (*turning to the Father*). I wonder whether your experience with those army intelligence tests has been similar to my own. Every one in the world today seems so eager to find an objective, mathematical standard of measurement for testing human beings that they snatch at any possibility that promises objective exactitude. But in spite of thousands of psychologists who now swear by these tests as a satisfactory means of measuring innate intellectual capacity, I am still trying to discover what the intelligence they say they test really is. You're both aware, I suppose, that the experts on intelligence tests themselves admit they don't know what it's all about.

Moth. Are they frank enough to admit it?

Psych. Well, here is a statement from a pair of them: "The need for a psychological examination has been recognized before the psychologist has really had time to formulate his own conceptions of the whole problem. Theoretical considerations have lagged behind the practical application of mental tests. *We have been measuring intelligence long before we have decided as to what intelligence really is.* Far from being a drawback, as this at first sight would appear to be, it has in fact proved to be of distinct advantage, since the measurement of this something that we have been making is leading us slowly but surely to a real knowledge of what can with profit be called '*general intelligence.*' Only after considerable work did psychologists arrive at the now generally accepted definition of intelligence, as enunciated by Stern, that intelligence is a general capacity of an individual consciously

to adjust his thinking to new requirements; it is a general *mental* adaptability to new problems and conditions of life.

"Although even this definition of intelligence may be modified in the future, it serves at the present time as a good working hypothesis for the solution of tests for mental measurement." [1]

Fath. Another way of forcing home on us the chaos of our mental life! Think what it means when the psychologists themselves admit how little they know about their own business! But the dangerous thing is the way that they go right ahead nevertheless, foisting their results on the public in such a simple and convincing form that I think most parents nowadays really believe that these much-touted intelligence tests can measure the innate capacity of their children in some exact and final way.

Psych. Yes, I think there is more damage done to real education by the exaggerated claims of the "mental tester" than there is advantage gained by the extent of their psychological measurements.

Fath. It was the same in the army. After all, what is this general intelligence they claim to measure? We're agreed that it's a very specialized kind of mental ability, encouraged and overdeveloped by our present system of education.

Psych. Yes. I feel that the psychologists who point with pride to their index of intelligence are like those indefatigable fishermen who stock a lake with unhatched fish and return later to the selfsame pools, hooking those very fish, and then cry out, "Look at the wonderful fish we have discovered!"

Fath. Yes, that's so. The intelligence testers do pull out of the children what has either been deposited there or

[1] R. Pintner and D. G. Paterson, *Scale of Performance Tests,* p. 1.

already molded into its present form by our overintellectual system of education.

Psych. It is difficult to understand how these psychologists can claim, as they do, to test a definitely fixed capacity, derived from heredity, when they have paid so little attention to the complex influence of environment on the first years of a child's life.

Moth. There's something unreal to me about these mental tests. I haven't the technical knowledge to put my finger on their defects, but I simply know that they don't begin to test the qualities I am aware of in many sorts of human beings. But of course I do realize that the school takes all that into consideration, from the way it has dealt with our own two children.

Psych. The question of difference of type or temperament is not considered in these tests. And that's why they are especially unsatisfactory in dealing with imaginative and creative children like your Ruth. On the other hand, the tests are just made to check the workings of the kind of scientific mind that your son has.

Fath. But what remains then of the claim of these psychologists, that they are able to check general intelligence in terms of innate capacity, not acquired information? I think there are many varieties of human capacity that these "experts" don't begin to touch.

Psych. Yes, the response to these tests depends on a specialized type of intelligence. Such capacities as instinctive skill, mechanics and motor co-ordination, or creative power in the arts and crafts, are at a discount in the theoretical education that our modern world so largely overvalues.

Fath. What significant principle of selection is there, anyway, to the material chosen in these Binet-Simon tests? I can't see why questions as to the meaning of abstract words or the tracing of a lost ball around a diagrammatic

ball field are superior to other materials of daily experience and common knowledge. What is to be the principle of selection? Why shouldn't the capacity to meet the problems of practical daily living be included, such as the power to mend an electric bell or broken plumbing? Power to do as well as to reason.

Psych. But it's obvious enough why such problems are not included. Our education is still concerned with a single type of intelligence—that is the exclusively mental.

Fath. And how would you classify other kinds of intelligence that it still ignores?

Psych. There are two other types, two other kinds of knowing that are neither measured nor valued by means of these intelligence tests. There are intelligences that do not start from intellectual mind at all. There is intelligence that lives and grows out of movement and action, an instinctive intelligence; and there is intelligence that has its roots in the emotional and intuitive life, a feeling-intelligence. These are just as important in their way as that intellectual type which dominates the education of our day and age. Instead of helping to build up human beings by uncovering the variation or special needs of their type, these tests tend to break them down. Uniformity of classification into age groupings—into inferior, average, and superior abilities—these ignore the special quality, the individuality and creative power that are unique to each person and not the habit of the mass.

Fath. I've noticed that those who give mental tests are so much more interested in the tests than in the children.

Psych. Yes. I had an amazing experience of the way this testing mania is poisoning the springs of education. The head of a large foundation that professes to be specially desirous to forward art and education in America came not long ago to visit an exhibition of the art work at

our school. I happened to be in the room when he arrived and showed him around. He responded with a meaningless and well-bred interest. But the only time his eyes lit up and his voice rang with warmth was when he turned to me and said, "You know, if you had only developed some exact scale for measuring artistic ability, comparable to the Binet tests for intelligence, *then* our foundation might be interested in helping develop the art work of this school. *That* would be important."

Fath. Officialdom rampant! Our psychologists and educators ought to be interested in the creative life as it flows through the children. But like the child who plucks the wings of a fly, they prefer dead parts to a living whole.

Psych. These intelligence tests have gone a long way from their original purpose. They were at first simply meant to sift the backward from the normal children. Then the results of these tests created averages for each age that were set up as the norm for children in general. And lastly, those children who registered high above the average were titled as the superior, or "genius," class.

Moth. There is a certain danger to the children themselves in the public prominence now given these tests. Don't you think that knowledge of their ratings in terms of their "mental age" can have a bad effect?

Psych. I do, particularly with the older boys and girls, who ought, above all, to be given a sense of the partial and relative significance of any such estimates.

Fath. But naturally when adults respect these short cuts to the classification of human beings, the younger generation is also swayed.

Moth. Yes. I know several families whose children have been thrown quite off their balance by these tests. In one, a boy of fourteen has been going to his friends and bragging that since he tested two years above his age,

he wouldn't have to work hard at school this year or next.

Fath. And then, there are other children we know whose self-confidence has been badly shaken by being told that they tested "only average" for their age. I'm sure there is a false note struck in the standards of school work by injecting this concept of the mental age of normal children through the Binet tests. The tests have, of course, been useful and important in sorting out inferior and average children, according to our present educational standards of intellectual ability. But when expert intelligence testers themselves admit that they don't know what intelligence is, why, this whole performance becomes suspect.

Psych. As I've explained, I can only regard these tests as a useful check on one kind of intelligence, and even for that, far from complete. You know, I suppose, that Professor Terman is making a study of a thousand gifted children in the California schools, following them through to see what happens in their adult careers.

Fath. Yes. He picked their "gifts" according to his intelligence tests. And I'm sure that in his heart of hearts he expects the major portion of these very high I.Q. children that he places in the "genius" class to become no less than Napoleons, Raphaels, and Beethovens. He must nurse a secret hope of uncovering some of our future geniuses in this pile. One might trace a corollary to this in the recent work of another psychologist, a Dr. Cox who, at Terman's instigation, made a scientific investigation of the childhood of three hundred geniuses born between 1450 and 1850.

Moth. So it's come to that! The intelligence testers have now taken not only the present and future as their province, but the past as well.

Psych. Oh, yes. Don't you think it will help you considerably to appreciate and above all understand genius

if I tell you that as children up to the age of sixteen, Dr. Cox states, George Washington, General Sherman, and Johann Sebastian Bach were given ratings of 125; General Grant, Raphael, and Rembrandt, 110; John Bunyan and Copernicus, 105; Pascal and Macaulay, 180; Goethe, 185; and John Stuart Mill, 190? Mill was the smartest of all the children, according to these tests.

Fath. This is too much. I suppose it's largely because Mill learned Latin at three or four years of age that he was placed above Bunyan, Copernicus, and Bach. No, this is too silly to talk about! Let's forget it. I'd rather we went on with what methods are available to help us in a more accurate study of individual children than is possible with these tests.

Psych. We all know that the first attempts to standardize the normal intelligence grew out of a desire to sift it from the background of the subnormal. And as psychology concentrates upon its efforts to penetrate the normal, it is forced to delve into those human variations known as abnormal. For the more we get to know about people, the less we are prepared to say that such and such is the balanced, the normal way for a human being to act. In fact, the more we know about man, the more we wonder, "Is there such a thing as a 'normal human being' anyway, or isn't that perhaps a composite picture of ideal traits, quite as imaginary and unreal as that much overworked figure of the 'economic man'?"

Fath. Oh, yes, if we examine ourselves and our intimates sincerely, we can only bow to the discoveries of the new psychology and admit that we, our families, and our friends, are, to state it mildly, not free from the very traits which may be found more deeply ingrained in the neurotic, the hysteric, and the insane.

Psych. You have come to an inner realization of the

fact that the gradations between normal and abnormal are so subtle and complex that we can no longer deal with them either educationally or medically as though they were disconnected. But the trouble is that those concerned with the education of normal children are, on the whole, scarcely aware that those strands of behavior visible in the neurotic are equally discoverable in the normal.

Fath. In other words, education hasn't yet recognized that the difference between the neurotic and the so-called normal is one only of degree and not of kind.

Psych. More than that. Teachers remain ignorant of the extent to which the scale of human behavior includes not merely mental, but emotional and instinctive responses. And more important still, they are, as a rule, totally unaware of the rôle of "the unconscious" in their own lives or in those of the children whom they should direct.

Fath. Those intelligence testers work on the assumption that it is possible to ignore the emotional states of those they are examining.

Psych. Yes. That is one of my chief criticisms of the Binet tests, that they may fail to test accurately a child's mental capacity, not because of the limitation of the tests themselves, but because a child's ability to show what he does know varies with the degree of emotional equilibrium he may be able to maintain at a given moment.

Fath. And are you then suggesting what I felt so clearly in the army tests, that emotional disturbances, unconscious as well as conscious, might interfere with a pure response to the tests?

Psych. Yes, of course. A certain type of child may be afraid, or may take a dislike to the psychologist who gives the test. He may be in a state of turmoil over a family quarrel or feel insecure as to his ability to deal with the tests at all. I merely suggest a few of the possible emo-

tional disturbances that may interfere with achieving satisfactory results by means of these intelligence tests, even within the limits of what the psychologists themselves would claim.

Fath. Anyway, the situations selected for the intelligence tests are so arbitrary and separate from the problems of real life. It's the kind of people who do well at crossword puzzles that are sure to respond with interest and enthusiasm to these tests.

Psych. Yes. But there are just as many individuals who are bored and uninterested by these arbitrary and isolated problems that seem to have no wider significance or practical use. Such children cannot take these intelligence tests seriously enough to make their best efforts in such hypothetical situations.

It might shock some of our most serious intelligence testers to discover how many of the children they examine regard them as poor fools, who waste time asking intelligent and sensible children useless and irrelevant questions.

Sixth Dialogue

The School Psychologist and a Mother and Father Discuss the Problem of Human Types

Father. The last time that we had an appointment, you analyzed the question of intelligence and other special tests with us. I'd like to follow up certain references you made at that time to other possible methods of making type-analyses.

Psychologist. Oh, now I recall our talk. You refer to my criticism of the intelligence tests as failing to fulfill all that is claimed for them. How they deal with only one type of intelligence—the mental type.

Fath. Yes. I wish you'd explain that point more completely about other kinds of intelligence. I'd also like you to tell me what you think about the various attempts that have been made of late to classify us according to physiological and psychological type.

Psych. That's a large order. But you've raised one of the most interesting questions that our education must prepare to deal with. It's one that concerns me vitally.

Mother. I should expect so, since I see that adjustment of personality is the keynote of this school.

Psych. Yes. The organization of a suitable curriculum and proper environment in a school like ours is bound up with a special study of the type, temperament, and needs of individual children.

Fath. And so, to get back to my original question, what practical values have you found in the modern classification of human type?

Psych. Do you mean that you'd like to go into the possible classifications of type according to the various schools of psychoanalysis as well as according to glands of internal secretion?

Fath. That's just what I mean.

Psych. From an attempt to study what's available on the problem of types since ancient times, from the Greeks and the early Christians on through the Middle Ages and our multitude of recent experiments, there's one obvious conclusion. No single approach has as yet unified the diverse physiological and psychological factors into even a prospectively comprehensive scheme. As a working basis for our present desire to harmonize personality in a practical way, we are still forced to delve into the past and sift the present, in order to gather and rearrange suggestive hints for classifying human beings.[1]

Moth. But you show in your school a certain openness as to classification of type in relation to sex that is as yet scarcely acceptable to most schools. You no longer distinguish beween what work a boy or a girl shall or may do in school because of sex differences.

Psych. You're right. And a refusal, educationally, to train boys and girls according to a theoretical social ideal of sex functions is a step toward an attempt to deal with them as individuals, determined not by their sex distinc-

[1] It is interesting to note that as this volume was going to press, I discovered an extraordinary book, by the French physician Dr. Paul Carton, *Le Traité de Médicine d'Alimentation et d'Hygiène Naturistes,* in which the original classifications of type according to the four humors of the ancient becomes the basis of a modern doctor's consideration of human beings today in terms of physiological form and psychological temperament.

tion but according to their particular type and temperament as well.

Fath. But this matter of masculine and feminine traits goes far beyond the merely biological distinctions of men and women.

Psych. Yes, indeed. You anticipated me. I was just about to say that so-called masculine and feminine characteristics were necessarily one of the most complex and important elements in type discrimination.

Fath. Do you think that has always been so?

Psych. Yes. But I think that we are living in a period today when it is particularly evident, and therefore especially necessary to understand in dealing with growing boys and girls.

Moth. By evident, do you mean in the adult world?

Psych. Yes, surely. Whatever one's personal estimate of the present situation may be, no one who senses the trend of our age can fail to note the strange crossing of currents between the sexes at the present time. Stated most simply, we have the emergence of the aggressive, dominant, masculine woman, and the growing preponderance of the more passive, sensitive, and feminine man.

Fath. Yes, I too have watched this subtle transformation and shifting of forces. And I've often wondered, admitting the situation, while resisting it instinctively as a man, how much it might be the inevitable back-swing of the pendulum to help right the world balance of the past.

Psych. It may be that. But most of the time the problem in terms of type is not so simple as that. For it seems as though there had come to be an agreement in the course of the ages that certain human traits be conceded as feminine and others as masculine in direction.

Fath. Due, I suppose, to an original ideal of pure and

extreme types of men and women, conceived in a simpler period than our own.

Psych. Yes. And as we proceed to discuss the various types of classification suggested, keep this in mind, that we always do tend to call the positive, aggressive attitude of action, masculine, and the passive, intuitive, and feeling way of being, feminine, in whichever sex it so manifests itself. All of which, as you suggest, is grounded in our own still primitive conception of male and female. But as these simple and more primitive types are on the wane, we must be on the lookout for these more complex ones that are now the concomitant of our modern world.

Fath. And a truly rounded or complete individual of either sex will certainly contain much of what is known as feminine sensibility combined with a so-called masculine power to do in terms that are true to his or her own being.

Psych. Do you know that in the traditions of the past there seem to have been foreshadowed several classifications of type which are now being expanded by scientists of our own time?

Fath. Does one of them refer, perhaps, to the ancient and mediaeval belief that man falls into four distinct types, determined by what was called humors?

Psych. Yes. The suggestions embodied in the descriptions of the sanguine, the choleric, the phlegmatic, and the melancholic temperaments seem to find their analogues in the recently evolved glandular types, offspring of the new science of endocrinology.

Fath. And what other scientific theory of today links us with past tradition?

Psych. You know that the ancients held man in his variation of type and form to be of the nature of those other creatures in the animal world that he so often re-

sembles. And now comes MacAuliffe, who suggests a scientific hypothesis to back up the old tradition. He lines up man as well as animals into the extremes of slow and ample types as opposed to the swift, lithe, and slender, and suggests that in the chemistry of the bodies of both animals and man there may be a set of processes which determines the startling duality of form. Here, then, we find a serious scientist who "asks us to cast a glance at the animal world, and to take note, not of species, but of forms. We see the ponderous hippopotamus, the rounded waddling pig, the squarely built ruminating ox, the old myxoedematous orang-outang, the *type digestif* of man. On the other side we see the angular, the lithe, the swift of foot—the agile, timorous gazelle, all legs and watchful eye and twitching nostrils, the attenuated giraffe, the slim greyhound, and the astheno-athletic man." [1]

Moth. That's fascinating, to see the scientists swinging back to such classifications of man according to his animal traits. I've always found it one of the most exact ways of classifying the people I meet. I have an entire menagerie among my acquaintances, ostriches, reptiles, elephants, rabbits, skunks, foxes—everything.

Fath. But on what principle does MacAuliffe interpret these two divisions into the large, slow, bulky forms and the swift and agile creatures?

Psych. He suggests that "since biochemically living things are colloidal structures, their form is perhaps determined by their power of water absorption and retention, or as he calls it, hydrophyly." [2]

Fath. So he suggests power of water absorption as the means of distinguishing the gamut of living forms. I'll have to think about that; it's a new idea to me.

[1] E. Miller, *Types of Mind and Body*, p. 30.
[2] *Ibid.*

Psych. Well, it must relate, of course, to the entire cycle of animal evolution from sea- to land-forms.

Fath. Yes, that helps to fill in the picture.

Psych. Though I can't see exactly why MacAuliffe should regard "those creatures that are built on simple lines and cubic in form as positively hydrophylic; whereas the angular, the lithe, and swift of foot are negatively hydrophylic."

Moth. But just as one could classify people by their animal prototypes, one could also distinguish them as types of physical structure, gesture, or rhythmic gait. Don't you find it so?

Psych. Oh, yes. And there again you have modern science stepping in to back you up. Your own intuitive and common-sense methods of judgment gain fresh reënforcements. For according to the growing though still incomplete data on ductless glands, we are all of us determined in temperament, physique, and power, according to the dominant rôle played by our thyroid, pituitary, or adrenal glands.

Fath. I'm still inclined to take the claims of some of these gland enthusiasts with a grain of salt. They are not unlike those intelligence testers you quote who undertake to reduce men of genius to figures that simply prove the validity of their own tests. The gland experts try to do the same thing. They too have Napoleons, Dostoievskys, and Darwins accounted for in terms of glandular activity. And then how much nearer are we this time to an explanation of any of them as human beings?

Psych. Through the ages, attempts at type classification show a tendency to group by opposites. Contrasts apparently make up the obviously pure types at the extremities of any classification. Just as we've noted the opposition in form of physique, and contrast in the nature

of masculine and feminine traits, so the ancients in their description of humors also juxtaposed the dry and the wet, the hot and the cold. In recent descriptions this opposition of types is still in evidence. Trotter divides people into the mentally "stable" and "unstable." The stable-minded he describes as "insensitive to experience," "closed to the entry of new ideas," and "obsessed with the satisfactoriness of things as they are." [1]

Moth. And how does he describe the mentally unstable?

Psych. As "tending to be weak in energy, especially in persistence of energy for action," but "strong in maintaining individual values" and "critical of herd standards." [2]

Fath. Yes, it's the same contrast again, but with the emphasis upon two other extreme types, one which fulfills the social, the other the individual, norm.

Psych. Yes. When society is included as the background from which types emerge, and with which they inevitably act, and react, we touch a new element in their evolution.

Fath. What's that?

Psych. Well, in various ages or civilizations, it seems as though certain types have been at a premium, others at a discount. So that the rounding-out of type development appears to depend on two factors, the inherent force or power of the individual himself, and the kind of cultural milieu in which he happens to be born.

Fath. You mean, for instance, that in our bustling American world of business, the man of affairs is strengthened by the agreement between his type and the values set up in his immediate environment?

Psych. Just so. And the converse is equally true. The visionaries and idealists of today are a feeble minority, always on the defensive, misfits in a practical world. One

[1] W. Trotter, *Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War*, pp. 55-60.
[2] *Ibid.*

can be sure that in the age of Pericles or the time of the prophets, the sculptor, the poet, and the seer were the real masters.

Fath. And those masters of yesterday we recognize as the slaves of today.

Psych. You agree, don't you, then, that the dominant type of each civilization depends on the culture from which it springs?

Fath. Yes, and the lack of understanding or sympathy between conflicting cultures or races finds analogy in the opposition between different types in the same environment.

Psych. That's surely so. For, whether we agree with one or another of the many recent classifications, it is obvious that these distinctions of type manifest themselves in totally different mechanisms of orientation, both as to social environment and the personal self.

Fath. Yes. But when we get down close to our own selves, we can't escape the question of consciousness. Not only "What are we doing?" and "How are we doing it?" but "What do we *think* we are doing?" and "What do we *think* the other fellow is doing?"

Psych. You have us back again, then, to the part that the unconscious plays in our daily lives.

Fath. Well, yes. We can't avoid that in any sincere attempt to deal with types today, can we?

Psych. No. And I'm the last to wish to do that, since I know that consciousness plays so slight a part in the whole of our psychic life.

Fath. Granted, then, that manifest behavior is largely the result of unconscious motives and cannot be rightly understood by the usual explanations we are only too ready to give of our own conduct— What follows then?

Psych. Why, the importance of the analytic technique

as a means of uncovering the hidden motives, the real wishes, that are governing the lives of all of us; and the obvious conclusion that opposite types respond in their unconscious as well as their conscious life to the selfsame stimuli in radically different ways.

Fath. But the individuals themselves are rarely aware that their manner of reacting is peculiarly their own and that people of other types find their behavior incomprehensible and strange.

Psych. Among analysts, Jung seems to have made the widest classification of types. And his division of people, once again a grouping of opposites, depends on the predominance of the subjective or the objective orientation of individuals. He calls "introvert" the one whose standpoint "under all circumstances sets the self and the subjective psychological process above the object and the objective process, or at any rate holds its ground against the object." [1] And his "extravert," "on the contrary, sets the subject below the object, whereby the object receives the predominant value."

Moth. Then it's the people who tend to draw back into their shells that Jung calls introverts, and those who run out easily toward people or things are the extraverts?

Psych. Yes, you've got his point. He summarizes the difference of mechanism between the two groups in this way: "It is plain that the psychology resulting from these antagonistic standpoints must be distinguished as two totally different orientations. The one sees everything from the angle of his conception, the other from the viewpoint of the objective occurrence."

Moth. Do you think all of us fit more or less into these two groupings?

Psych. In a general way, I do. Though it's not always

[1] C. G. Jung, *Psychological Types*, p. 12.

easy to judge what the fundamental mechanism in certain people really is. It is likely to take much time and effort to be sure. The true type of so many people is covered over and disguised by a mask-like defense, in reactions that are contrary to the fundamental nature of their being. All of us contain the double rhythm of going out toward and withdrawing from the external world. The decision as to whether one falls among the extraverts or introverts depends upon the beat on which the strong accent falls.

Fath. It seems to me that our double rhythm, back and forth, in and out, is but another manifestation of the pulse of this universe. Everything has its being within the movement of this double rhythm. There exists a polarity of opposites; whether it be in the turn and return of the tides, in the alternation of the seasons, or in the periodic transit of night to day.

Psych. Yes. It has been said that our estimate of time units, the dividing measure of life, is itself derived from this same double rhythm, a measuring of seconds in terms of human breath. So that the further one considers the universe in terms of rhythm or vibration, as the scientists now say we must, the more simple, the more natural, becomes a view of man defined by the alternation of this double rhythm. The transition then from this unique and fundamental pulse of the universe to its particular rhythm in man seems both simple and inevitable. Systole and diastole repeat again in the pulsation of our heart.

Moth. Yes, I've always sensed these two contrary rhythms in the make-up of individuals, the difference between what you now call the "introvert" and the "extravert." You know how distinctly my children fall into those two categories—the girl with her subjective, the boy with his objective, attitude. But still there's really not enough in that to distinguish all kinds of people from each other.

Psych. Agreed; it's too general. But Jung goes ahead and subdivides human beings into four general types, according to the predominance of either *thinking*, *feeling*, *sensation*, or *intuition* in their general make-up. But each of these types can also be introvert or extravert according to his relation to the external world and his inner self.

Moth. That's rather interesting. But it makes a minimum of eight distinct types. But let's see how it works out when applied to people one knows. I think I could agree on the spot that certain ones can be described as thinking, feeling, or sensation types. But I really question calling intuition by itself a just classification for any separate type.

Psych. That's exactly my conclusion. I believe that intuition in varying forms is a concomitant of the other types, and not one by itself.

Moth. That fits in with my own experience of people.

Psych. And do you know, I believe that there is more concrete physiological foundation for such a classification into three main types, according to the functioning of our muscular, visceral, and cerebral systems, than for any other grouping I've come across.

Fath. How would the correspondence work out? Muscular system with the sensation type?

Psych. Yes.

Fath. Visceral system with the feeling type?

Psych. Of course. The solar plexus always connects with our emotions.

Fath. And then the cerebral system remains certainly as the dominant instrument of the mental type.

Psych. It may interest you to know in this connection that the ancient Gnostics, the group that was later rejected from the organized Christian Church, had just such a threefold grouping of types, naming what prob-

ably corresponds to the thinking or intellectual type the *Pneumatici*, to the feeling type the *Psychici*, and the sensation type the *Hylici*.

Fath. And have any scientists in modern times recognized such a scheme as a workable classification?

Psych. Well, I was surprised to find the identical grouping elaborated by J. A. Thomson in his *Introduction to Science*—the same three types fully described as related to the modern world. I'd like you to listen to this. It lends support to what your wife and I seem to agree upon as the most useful and direct classification of man:

"First there is the mood of the dominantly practical man, whose whole trend is towards doing, not towards knowing. He must, of course, know his facts if his doings are to be effective, and he must likewise have sound social feeling if his doings are to be deeds, not misdeeds. . . . Yet he himself would be the first to point out that he had no particular hunger or thirst after the descriptive formulae which science seeks to supply. So far as Science means that kind of knowledge which is Foresight, that kind of foresight which is Power, he believed in it but, on the whole, it did not interest him. Similarly, while he would confess to a pleasure in friendly relations between man and man, and between man and his beasts, and to a sometimes apparently hyperaesthetic sense of order, he would admit, on the whole, that aesthetic emotion was not much in his line. He was not built that way.

"Secondly there is the emotional-aesthetic mood, which finds expression in Schiller's words, 'Oh, wondrous beautiful is God's earth, and good it is to be a man upon it.'

"From man's first emergence, perhaps, the herbs and the trees, the birds and the beasts, sent tendrils into his heart, claiming and finding kinship. Ever so early there must have been a rude joy in the heavens and the earth, and in

the pageant of the seasons—something more than the pleasure of basking in the sun like a lizard. Probably, however, it was not until man had gained some firmness of footing in the world, secured by his wits against stronger rivals and a careless environment, that the emotional tone grew into dignity as a distinct mood, a genuine enjoyment of beautiful things, which found expression in music and dancing, in song and story, in painting and carving and in religious rites.

"Like the practical mood, so the emotional mood has its obvious virtues. It is part of the salt of life. It begets a sympathy that is insight. In a noisy world it helps to keep us aware of the harmony hidden in the heart of things.

"The scientific worker has elected primarily to know, not to do. He does not directly seek, like the practical man, to realize the ideal of exploiting nature and controlling life—though he makes this more possible; he seeks rather to idealize—to conceptualize—the real, or at least those aspects of reality that are available in his experience. He thinks more of lucidity and formulae than of loaves and fishes. He is more concerned with knowing nature than with enjoying her. His main intention is to describe the sequences in nature in the simplest possible formulae, to make a working thought-model of the known world. He would make the world translucent, not that emotion may catch the glimmer of the indefinable light that shines through, but for other reasons—because of his inborn inquisitiveness, because of his dislike of obscurities, because of his craving for a system—an intellectual system in which phenomena are at least provisionally unified." [1]

I like the way Thomson, while really describing three distinct approaches to life, classifies them as moods. And

[1] J. Arthur Thomson, *An Introduction to Science*, p. 9.

that rather suggests what we know within ourselves, that although some one of these three types is sure to predominate, the others are also present, playing their part in our lives in certain moods or under particular circumstances.

Fath. That's true enough. If we did not each of us contain elements of all three types we could not respond as we do to the virtues of the go-doer, the instinctive type, who dominates affairs, as well as to the artist, the emotional type who transmutes feeling into permanent form, and finally to the scientist or philosopher, the intellectual type, who forever seeks the ultimate source and meaning of life.

Moth. But in our everyday world people can't be divided off so simply as that. The three classes are all mixed up and result in complex personalities.

Psych. Oh, yes. These wide classifications are somewhat theoretical. In most people the interrelation of these three elements varies considerably. Don't forget, either, that they can all be present, as either positive or negative attitudes, in sensation, thought, or feeling. And then, to complicate our types still more, we have to allow for the possible addition of various degrees of intuition to complete their human patterns.

Fath. By the time all possible combinations and permutations are made of these human traits, we must not omit to add the orientation of each individual, grouped according to the mechanism of introversion or extraversion. By that time we might have more than enough classification to fit all the people we know. I wonder! But didn't the analysts, Freud and Adler, suggest some other ordering of people?

Psych. They were more concerned with uncovering the mechanisms of character formation than of fundamental types. Freud, as you know, reduces the adult to terms of

those infantile wishes that bind him to his primary relationship with his parents. As the instinctive life is the source of all Freudian psychology, it is naturally the basis for descriptions of type also. So far, very little has been published by Freud on character as related to normal types. Suggestions as to such classifications may be gathered here and there in the midst of his clinical studies. In fact, a thorough review of Freud's theories of the development of infantile sexuality, as well as an examination of his theories of neurosis and psychosis, would be necessary to give full meaning to the Freudian classification of character or type as oral, anal, and narcissistic. These type distinctions, based as they are on the particular organization of instinctive energy, remain as yet incompletely related to normal types. But if I tell you that according to Freud, the chief characteristics of the anal type include orderliness, parsimony, and obstinacy, you can begin to see how his type classification is reaching out to include groups of characteristic traits familiar to us all in our daily lives.

Adler, on the other hand, now calling his own technique "individual psychology" and not psychoanalysis, has developed his description of the neurotic constitution into a formula which he applies especially to the treatment of nervous children. At the root of all nerve disorders he claims there exists a state of anxiety or insecurity based on the will to power, in the Nietzschean sense. This, he says, takes the form of the "wish to be a complete man" and the fear of the neurotic that he may fail in this purpose. And women as well as men, says Adler, have this wish to be a man, as the symbol of power. Hence the woman stands, in his psychology, as the symbol of weakness, for both sexes. The cause of the sense of inferiority in the neurotic, according to Adler, is an original organic in-

feriority of some kind. And this leads individuals aware of some physical weakness to compensate in other directions for an original or incipient defect. Thus a stammerer, by doubling his efforts, may conquer the world with words, and a boy with weak digestion, in spite of or because of such handicap, may train himself to excel as an athlete in later life.

Fath. Adler's psychology seems then to be an apologia, a defense of weakness as a means to strength, by methods of overcoming.

Psych. You might put it that way. But all these interpretations of human motives and mechanisms, while important as contributions to understanding character, are not on the same level as the more general classifications of type by Jung or by Thomson.

Fath. No, I see that. But why haven't Freud and Adler also, I wonder, gone deeper into this problem of type?

Psych. That seems rather clear to me. It is because both of them belong among the extraverts, and their chief concern is with empirical science and its observable facts.

Fath. While Jung?

Psych. Being an introvert, is more interested in the undeniable reality and power behind the manifest idea. But we continue to talk of methods and of studying types, disregarding, for the moment, the extent to which personal type has always influenced the methods adopted by individual psychologists and educators and philosophers throughout the ages. The moment we begin to theorize, we assume the possibility of such detachment and depersonalization as I have never found to exist in the living exponent of any known theory. Psychoanalysts, behaviorists, pragmatists, all continue to interpret human motives and needs from the particular orientation of their own

types. This is true whether they are aware of it, and admit it, or not.

Fath. Can you cite some examples?

Psych. Easily. They are all about us. Perhaps certain views related to this subject expressed by Professor Dewey and Dr. Watson would clarify the point. I recall reading not long ago an opinion of Dewey's that caused me some surprise: "The difference," he wrote, "between an 'intuitive' and an analytic person is at most a matter of degree, a relative emphasis. The 'reasoning' person is one who makes his 'intuitions' more articulate, more deliverable in speech, as explicit sequence of initial premises, jointures and conclusions." [1]

Moth. How strange! Imagine any truly intuitive person agreeing to that definition! Who ever heard of calling intuition and reason the same thing? Not if you've had any profound experience of intuition as such.

Fath. And not if you've experienced reason *and* intuition as two utterly distinct modes of response.

Psych. I just quoted that to raise the question as to who, after all, is in any position to judge these problems, free from the bias of his own type. The people a Dewey convinces are those who tend to think and feel and act as he does. And likewise, those a John Watson satisfies with his behaviorist psychology are of the type already disposed to pin their faith to objective phenomena.

Fath. What you're getting at is, then, that there is no single view, there is no *whole* and absolute view.

Psych. I might even go so far as to say *there is no right view.* And then we should be back at the base of things with old Socrates when he says: "But if, Theaetetus, you have or wish to have any more embryo thoughts, they will

[1] John Dewey, *Experience and Nature,* p. 300.

be all the better for the present investigation, and if you have none, you will be soberer and humbler and gentler to other men, not fancying that you know what you do not know."[1]

Fath. Yes, to know that we do not know is sobering indeed.

[1] *Dialogues of Plato,* Jowett translation, Vol. III, p. 419.

Seventh Dialogue

The School Psychologist and A Mother and Father Discuss Behaviorism and Gestalt Psychology

Father. In our other talks we discussed two of the most interesting problems that confront psychology today.

Psychologist. Yes, there is nothing more fundamental than the evaluation of tests and the analysis of types.

Fath. Unless it be a discussion of the present status of psychology as a science.

Psych. Do you really mean just that, or do you mean whether psychology can be considered in these days as a science?

Fath. Maybe I mean that I'd like to discover what you think psychology really is, or what its function should be.

Psych. That's something of a question, in a world that's packed with psychologists who can't agree on a definition of their own science, nor on its exact field. There was a time when all psychologists would without hesitation have called it a science of mind.

Fath. However great their disagreement might have been among themselves as to the nature of that mind?

Psych. Yes. The real problem and future of psychology ties up with a discovery of what mind really is. But now a challenge has been hurled at all of us, by the behaviorist group. They insist that the proper aim of

psychology is the collection of objective data as to the functions of our physical organisms.

Fath. In their emphasis on the manifestation of human action, the behaviorists have denied validity to the inner working of mind or consciousness. Isn't that so?

Psych. Oh, yes. They go so far as to say there is no such thing as consciousness.

Mother. But how can they convince me or any one else that there is no such thing as consciousness? I am aware of myself, of my own physical activities, of my home, of my children, in short, of my entire experience of daily life.

Fath. How do the behaviorists then dispose of all these elements of activity that distinguish us from the animals—what most of us, however little we comprehend it, have agreed to call consciousness?

Psych. Well, Watson denies the existence of consciousness and any such activities as sensation, imagination, or thought. Nothing, he says, which does not manifest in measurable external activity is real. Consciousness, to him, is just a word. Did any one from the behaviorist standpoint ever see or touch, taste or smell consciousness? No. Then it does not exist.

Moth. Why, that's too absurd! It makes me no better than an amoeba or a mouse.

Fath. Yes, my dear, that's exactly where the behaviorist means to push you—push all of us, I should say.

It seems to me that these behaviorists are not so far removed then from those other psychologists who believe that certain arbitrarily selected intelligence tests can demonstrate objectively the innate capacity of any human being.

Psych. Yes, those experts whose faith is in measurements of intelligence or special performance tests are closely allied to the behaviorist group. Their technique has

much in common. They all base their methods on modern developments of animal psychology, which in America grew out of the work of Thorndike. He is the same Thorndike who led the movement to flood our country with scales for measuring such studies as handwriting, mathematics, English, and anything else a child must take at school.

Fath. I understand that attempts to study and measure the exact responses of white rats, guinea pigs, and dogs preceded the later experiments with newborn infants.

Psych. Yes, behaviorism is based directly on the minute study and measurement of the mechanisms of animal response. In fact, the very foundation of behaviorist psychology is known as the "conditioned reflex," a special psychological mechanism which the Russian Pavlov classified after experimenting on the behavior of dogs.

Moth. That's another one of those technical phrases that I wish you'd explain.

Psych. The classic example of the conditioned reflex is the one to which I just referred. Pavlov placed a dog within a glass case, in complete isolation, and attached special instruments to measure the exact results. The particular experiment was concerned with the dog's saliva response in relation to the acquisition of food. A dog was given food, and at the instant when the sight of it drew saliva in his mouth, a certain musical note was sounded. After numerous repetitions of the associated stimuli, of food and this same musical note, the food stimulus was omitted entirely. Then this note, heretofore only sounded with the presentation of food, was struck alone. This produced in the dog the normal salivary response, just as it had always occurred at sight of food, while any other notes struck were without that effect.

Fath. This, then, was the conditioned reflex?

Psych. Yes. It rests, as you see, on the production of simultaneous stimuli at the moment of a certain response in a given subject. After a number of repetitions, the removal of the causal stimulus leads to the substitution of the associated action as the only stimulus necessary to produce the next response.

Fath. And how has this been applied to human psychology?

Psych. Watson made this conditioned reflex of Pavlov the foundation of his behaviorist psychology. He has made some particularly interesting and important contributions on this principle in relation to the conditioning of fear in newborn infants.

Fath. But what is your own response to the behaviorist standpoint that objectively observable data are alone to be admitted as the stuff of psychology?

Psych. On the positive side, it has led to the acquisition of some exact data as to the workings of the human mechanism; and it has also forced the other psychologists to admit distinctions that were formerly hazy between their facts that are verifiable and their hypotheses that are unproven. The absolute stand of the behaviorists has therefore cleared the decks for action.

Fath. But on the negative side, what have you to say?

Psych. A good deal.

Fath. I assume, from our previous talk on the limitations of tests, that you must, as I do, doubt the ability of any individual psychologist to act as an unprejudiced instrument to a purely objective experiment.

Psych. Yes, I do. And Whitehead has analyzed that point so beautifully that I want you to hear what he has to say: "It is an evident fact of experience that our apprehensions of the external world depend absolutely on the occurrences within the human body. By playing appro-

priate tricks on the body a man may be got to perceive or not to perceive almost anything. Some people express themselves as though bodies, brains, and nerves were the only real things in an entirely imaginary world. In other words, they treat bodies on objectivist principles. This will not do; especially when we remember that it is the experimenter's perception of another person's body which is in question as evidence." [1]

Fath. That's bully! It pulls the behaviorist right off his pedestal and brings him right down here where he belongs, as just another organism, quite as mechanical and subjectively conditioned as all the specimens he claims to test.

Psych. But that's not quite all. Whitehead then continues: "But we have to admit that the body is the organism whose states regulate our cognizance of the world. The unity of the perceptual field therefore must be a unity of bodily experience. In being aware of the bodily experience, we must thereby be aware of aspects of the whole spatio-temporal world as mirrored within the bodily life."

Fath. Whitehead seems there to be going after another aspect of behaviorism that seems arbitrary and incomplete.

Psych. Yes, that's why I went on reading a little further. Just like all those who believe in any form of set tests, behaviorists assume that it is possible, with human beings as with animals, to isolate a selected series of responses to be tested by some arbitrarily chosen stimuli. We have already discussed the way certain psychologists, depending wholly on intelligence tests, ignore the problem of type, temperament, or the emotional state of the subject studied.

[1] A. N. Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World*, p. 127.

Fath. Of course, the behaviorist is tarred with the same brush. And he too, with these other experimental psychologists, ignores the relations within the organism as a unity. Whitehead considers the bodily organism as a mirror of the world.

Psych. Ah, yes. There you touch again the behaviorist's denial of consciousness. To him, there is no inner life of the organism in which the world *could* be reflected.

Fath. Yes, of course. He allows only what can be objectively recorded. That must mean also a complete denial of personal experience as valid data for psychological study.

Psych. Exactly so. That's just what it means.

Fath. Haven't any of the psychologists met the behaviorist on his own ground? And while accepting the technique of physiological measurement as an instrument for psychology, haven't any of them shown up the absurdity of the behaviorist assertion that there is no such thing as consciousness?

Psych. Why, that's just what has been done recently in Germany. Maybe you've heard the name of the group. They're known as the Gestalt school.

Fath. Oh, yes. But I didn't know anything about what they stood for.

Psych. Well, the Gestalt group, headed by Köhler and Koffka, while accepting what is most valuable from the animal psychologists in methods of measuring external behavior, insist nevertheless on including consciousness as a measurable aspect of human behavior. This means that they accept records and reports of personal human experience as data of a physiological psychology of behavior, whereas the true behaviorists do not.

Fath. That's just the point I was trying to make against behaviorism myself.

Psych. Yes, that's why you'll be especially interested in Koffka's statement of the problem: "The behaviorist is right in denying the existence of conscious criteria wherever the method of experimental observation is inapplicable, but in spite of this we shall refuse to accept his position, for the simple reason that there is a consciousness, reports of which can only be made by the experiencing individual and which is therefore not subject to the control of others. . . .

"Were I not able to make a descriptive report of my behavior, I should be unable to make any record of it at all. Paradoxically expressed, if one had only the capacity to make such responses as others can observe, no one would be able to observe anything.

"It is therefore impossible to remove this aspect of behavior from science, not merely because of its immanent significance—since whatever we are, and of whatever we are proud, our culture, art, and religion, would otherwise be incomprehensible—but also because of the intimate connection which experience has with the objective side of behavior." [1]

Fath. Well, this is fun indeed, to discover psychologists who can outbehavior the behaviorists—using the behaviorist weapons of exact observation and measurement of objective phenomena, but insisting at the same time that a measurement of consciousness by recorded experience is to be regarded as important evidence of objective behavior. That's really excellent!

Psych. The Gestalt school seems to have brought psychology back into harmony with the thought and vision of many a philosopher and poet, by viewing the organism once again as a living whole, linked to the larger universe. Although the Gestaltists insist with the behaviorists on an

[1] K. Koffka, *The Growth of the Mind*, pp. 16-17.

exact physiological foundation to their psychology, they criticize the unwarranted and arbitrary methods of their confrères in isolating a subject from its natural environment during the making of tests or other experiments.

Fath. That sounds promising. But what does the word Gestalt mean?

Psych. Just because the word is so difficult to translate, the German expression has been carried over into other languages. The meaning of the word is related to this conception of "unitary structure," "pattern," "form," or "configuration"; all of these words are unsatisfactory translations of Gestalt. They are meant to express the constant correlation of the subject or quality under consideration with the background or setting from which it springs. The most satisfactory way is to let Koffka himself give you an approach to this new psychology. He is describing the condition of a newborn infant:

"The reader should not forget that we are speaking of the earliest beginnings of consciousness; and that it is the very first experience of the child that we are attempting to characterize. Our characterization is, then, this: that the first phenomena are *qualities upon a ground.* Introducing at this point a new concept, they are the simplest *mental configurations.* The phenomenal appearance in consciousness divides itself into a given quality, and a ground upon which the quality appears—a level from which it emerges. It is, however, a part of the nature of a quality that it should lie upon a ground, or, as we may also say, that it should rise above a level. Such a coexistence of phenomena in which each member 'carries every other' and in which each member possesses its peculiarity only by virtue of, and in connection with, all the others, we shall henceforth call a *configuration.* According to this view, the most primitive phenomena are

figural; as examples, the luminous point set off from a uniform background, something cold at a place upon the skin set off from the usual temperature of the rest of the skin; the too cold or too warm milk in contrast with the temperature level of the mouth-cavity. We attribute configurations, also, to such reactions as the rejection of milk when it is not of the right temperature; thus milk in the mouth may lead either to an 'adequate' or to an 'inadequate' configuration." [1]

Moth. I haven't been saying much, but I've been listening, and now it seems to me as though this new Gestalt psychology were back again to a kind of commonsense level of life. Instead of isolating children and animals under special testing conditions away from their normal environment, they really seem to take account of the natural setting as a factor that can't be left out of account.

Psych. True enough. While seeing all psychological reactions and relationships as dynamic patterns, there is no false perspective created by withdrawing a quality or a person from its normal environment. The Gestalt group regard the methods of the behaviorists as too simple for resolving the organic complexity of our psychology. When Koffka says, "What happens at one point in the organism is never independent of or without influence upon what is taking place at any other point in the organism," he is considering the organism as a whole. And to the Gestalt school, the records of personal experience are data quite as suitable to a physiological psychology as the mathematically measurable responses of the organism allowed by the behaviorists.

Fath. That reminds me of a question I wanted to discuss with you, as to the behaviorist technique. They criti-

[1] K. Koffka, *The Growth of the Mind*, pp. 131-132.

cize, I know, all psychologists who came before them as inexact, vague, and unscientific in their methods.

Psych. Yes. They have insisted on accurate mathematical measurements of observable phenomena, as in the other exact sciences.

Fath. That's just what I'm coming to. I don't see how the methods of such a science as physics can be transferred thus to the science of psychology. For the ideal of physics is to eliminate qualitative differences. And its purpose is ultimately to reduce all qualitative to quantitative values.

Psych. That's so.

Fath. Well, then, you must, I'm sure, agree with me that the attempt of the behaviorists to reduce psychology to a mathematical estimate of human behavior is absurd and impossible.

Psych. Absolutely.

Fath. Psychologists might as well shut up shop, if that's as far as they can go.

Psych. But forget your annoyance with the limitations of the behaviorists for a moment, and consider the more sympathetic and penetrating Gestalt point of view. They define psychology as "the study of the behavior of living beings in contact with their surroundings." [1] Immediately the estimation of values and qualities rather than quantity is implied in their psychology. And so on this point, also, you will find in the Gestalt group a most satisfactory refutation of the behaviorist attempt to reduce the technique of psychology to quantitative measurement. You see, I agree with you entirely that, had the behaviorists gained the day, psychology as a science would have lost the very thing that distinguishes it from physics and even biology—the ability to measure quality and value.

[1] K. Koffka, *The Growth of the Mind,* p. 10.

Eighth Dialogue

The School Psychologist and A Mother and Father Discuss Life and Consciousness

Father. Where then do we stand? We've reviewed the efforts of modern psychology to deal with man as just a mind, as a mere mechanism, and as possibly falling into definite types. What remains?

Psychologist. Man in relation to the universe, I should say. As Professor Piéron has it, "Man is the supreme integration of every system, nervous, vascular, glandular, or psychological." [1] Well, what is now man's position in the scheme of things?

Fath. Not quite so all-important as it once seemed to be. So infinitesimal in fact has man become in relation to the cosmic whole, that the contemplation of it humbles and reduces us to awe. How puny seem our attempts to see him on our little globe, rotating about our sun within a galaxy, itself one of perhaps innumerable galaxies!

Psych. It's overwhelming! But even that seems child's play in comparison with the attempt to realize that our own bodies as well as this physical universe consist of nothing but charges of positive and negative electricity! Limited as we are in our capacity to conceive of worlds beyond worlds, the effort at least has a definite starting-

[1] Professor Piéron, editorial in *The Journal of Neurology and Psychopathology,* Vol. I, 1920-21, p. 165.

point, definitely related to *a* world and *a* sun and our own *particular* Milky Way. But what can the maximum effort of our creative imagination do to bring us toward the least realization of ourselves and our universe as consisting of nothing but charges of electrical force?

Fath. Not much, it's true. For protons and electrons remain for us only theoretical structures, bare forms without substance or quality. Physicists have reduced all matter to terms of the atom. But what can that mean to us, who cannot know and cannot see the atom with our naked eye? It is as though there were at least two utterly different languages of the universe, that of the physicist which deals with the sensible universe, and that of our inner lives dealing with qualitative, non-sensible experience. Though different, the latter is in its own way quite as real as the language of science, and much more personal and intimate.

Psych. Yes, indeed. Professor Ogden has made a similar generalization, that "the actual process of psychological investigation involves a constant interchange between the two methods, study of the body and the nervous system by observation and the technique of the neurologist, and study of the mind by what is known as introspection. And in actual fact he [the reader] will constantly be attempting to translate the results of the one into the terms of the other." [1]

Fath. When Ogden suggests translating the language of the neurologist into that of the introspecting psychologist, that is not quite the same as I meant in translating from the physicist to the psychologist, and vice versa.

Psych. There is a man who has recently done just that in a book that I'm sure many people have been waiting for. It's called *The Mystery of Mind,* by Leonard

[1] C. K. Ogden, *The Meaning of Psychology,* p. 32.

Troland. Being both a physicist and psychologist, he has made just that necessary transitional step of suggesting the correspondence between the outer universe, the sensible world of physics, and our inner universe, the nonsensible world of consciousness.

Fath. Curious—our speaking of a sensible and nonsensible universe suddenly brings Aristotle and his metaphysics to mind.

Psych. And why not? What we're talking about concerns the very distinction Aristotle made between physics and metaphysics.

Moth. What's a good definition of metaphysics anyway?

Psych. Well, Webster says it is "derived from those discussions by Aristotle which he himself called the First Philosophy or Theology, and which deal with the nature of being, with cause or genesis, and with the existence of God. Later, possibly in part owing to the name, taken as signifying that which is beyond or above the physical, metaphysics was understood as the science of the supersensible."

Fath. When you regard metaphysics as dealing with the nature of being, it has more significance. But my efforts at reading philosophy, as well as my earlier studies at college, left me with a sense of the intellectual aridity of Aristotelian metaphysics; I always thought of it as concerned with formal and final causes.

Psych. I know that's the modern way of disposing of him. But there may be a value hidden for us in Aristotle's conception of metaphysics as a science above or beyond the physical, that was lost to our materialists of the twentieth century. It may be that when Aristotle contrasts metaphysics as the science of the non- or super-sensible with physics or natural philosophy as the science of the sensible

universe, he is not so far from our modern physicists. They deal with the nature of matter, which was until recently the province of philosophy.

Fath. And yet how much nearer are we to the fundamental solution of the mystery? Physics has come up against the almost metaphysical atom.

Psych. Only to explain that its nature is electrical. Where does that get us? What do we know about electricity?

Fath. We can describe its manifestations and speculate upon its structure, but as for knowing what it is, or controlling its energy at its source, we are still children.

Psych. And yet the problem of the control of life is ultimately the problem of the control of energy, whether in terms of physics or in terms of psychology.

Moth. Do you two really feel that the future of mankind depends on harnessing the energy of the atom?

Fath. Surely, the power to direct the forces of protons and electrons would make man and not nature the master of the future.

Moth. I wonder. So much has always been hoped and promised to man as he advanced step by step in his mastery of the physical universe. But what I've seen of life so far convinces me that all our time- and labor-saving devices have not led us to a more significant use of our increasing leisure. I don't think the ultimate problem lies in terms of the concrete and practical terms of money, time, and energy at all. Those things are important—I'm not denying that—but only as a means to life itself.

Psych. Yes, you're right.

Moth. But what I and other mothers want to know is what is the meaning of this restless existence of ours. If we adults have lost all our old values and aren't sure of any others, what can we do to orient our children?

Psych. It's true, the great, the ultimate, question is that of values. But I must tell you I don't think most parents would have the courage, even though they felt as you do, to come out and say so openly. You may be surprised to hear that Dr. John Watson, speaking as a parent, found himself in a similar impasse. He is reported to have said, "I'm now in a position to condition my children for anything. But what the devil am I going to condition them for?"

Fath. That is unexpected. The leader of the behaviorists admitting that he too lacks standards of value for use in his personal existence!

Psych. Yes. On all sides nowadays, whether it's openly admitted or not, there is a steady pressure and effort—a general reaching after a norm by which all of us may relate ourselves intelligently to life.

Fath. Religion, with its traditional creeds and doctrines, has nothing to offer to our day and age. Something else is needed.

Moth. You'd be amazed at the degree of questioning that's going on among the mothers of growing children about this question of religion. "What are you going to do," they say to me, "about this problem of religion, when your children begin to question? I've lost," they usually continue, "the old forms my parents still held to, and I have nothing definite to put in their place. When my children inquire, I don't know what to say. I don't believe in the old views, and yet I don't wholly deny some design or purpose in this life. It is difficult to explain one's vagueness. You can't say to a child, 'Yes, I believe in something, in some inward meaning in the relation of ourselves to a wider world. I believe there is a key or a clue to the mystery, but I haven't got it.' No, a child needs and demands a sense of security in this uncharted universe."

Psych. And what do you say when mothers speak thus to you?

Moth. The only thing that I can. As to my own state of being, my own sense of relation to the universe, I can only try, in my faltering way, to express the faith that I know for myself. For this faith brings me as a separate and isolate unit into harmony with the law and rhythm of the universe. I feel and know this through my own individual experience. I don't pretend to be able to communicate it to others, except perhaps to my children, with whom I am in such close rapport that our understanding does not depend on words.

Psych. You think you have said little, but I feel you have expressed much. I know that you have communicated to me a deep sense of your relation to the forces of life and that it comes close to Whitehead's formulation of religious consciousness—"The moment of religious consciousness starts from self-valuation, but it broadens into the concept of the world as a realm of adjusted values, mutually intensifying or mutually destructive. The intuition into the actual world gives a particular definite content to the bare notion of a principle determining the grading of values. It also exhibits emotions, purposes, and physical conditions, as subservient factors in the emergence of value.

"In its solitariness the spirit asks: What, in the way of value, is the attachment of life? And it can find no such value till it has merged its individual claim with that of the objective universe: Religion is world-loyalty." [1]

"Religion insists that the world is a mutually adjusted disposition of things, issuing in value for its own sake. This is the very point that science is always forgetting." [2]

[1] A. N. Whitehead, *Religion in the Making*, p. 60.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 143.

Fath. You two are more interested in generalities than I am. Speaking more concretely, I don't think there has been anything so contributory to revolutionizing our values as the Einsteinian views on time and space. Science, it seems to me, is doing its share toward establishing new values. And we can't just sit round until greater clarity comes to us each individually, from heaven knows where.

Psych. But when it comes to a question of values, have you noticed how science, as it becomes more dominant, becomes more dogmatic, and religion less so as its power wanes?

Moth. My impression is that the further science penetrates in its conquest of the physical universe, the less is it concerned with the state of being of man upon this earth. The eyes of the fool are on the ends of the earth!

Psych. True enough. And as a parallel, the further psychology advances in the perfection of instruments for measuring external behavior, the more it denies the inner life of being or consciousness.

Fath. But then modern science would say, in reply to that criticism, that its own development and very existence depend on sticking to observable and measurable facts. Scientists would smile at your criticism of their lack of concern with man's state of being and say that it was none of their business, that their concern was with the world of sensible phenomena. And they would cheerfully leave your subjective universe to philosophers and poets. In what sense did you mean just now that science was growing more dogmatic and religion less so?

Psych. Well, you've been following the developments of modern physics?

Fath. Oh, just as much as a layman can without special training in higher mathematics to fall back on.

Psych. That's all I meant. What's important to us as

educators is simply the viewpoint of modern science and the understanding of its attitude toward life. Scientists have so often defined their position as that of impersonal observers of sensible phenomena that the public is firmly persuaded that science really deals with facts and nothing but facts.

Moth. Why, of course! If science doesn't deal with facts what in the world does it do?

Psych. (*smiling*). Why, that's just what I was coming to. I was trying to suggest that it seems rather fond of dealing with dogmas, as well as with facts.

Moth. You surprise me! I thought religion might be accused of dealing with dogmas, but I thought science dealt with laws—the laws of nature and the universe.

Psych. Well, apparently it deals in both commodities. And whatever we may personally think, there are, you know, believers who make the same claims for religion that your husband makes for science.

Moth. But are you quite serious in talking of the *dogmas* of science?

Psych. Indeed I am. And although you seem surprised, I hasten to assure you that I'm not personally responsible for the growing realization that science is not quite so scientific as she has painted herself.

Moth. Before you go ahead I'd like to get a little clearer as to how you define dogma, since I've always associated it with religion.

Psych. That's a good idea. And to show you how much this very question touches not only modern science but modern religion as well, we have Whitehead defining dogma as the "precise enunciation of a general truth, divested so far as possible from particular exemplification." [1] And he further suggests certain advantages implicit in

[1] A. N. Whitehead, *Religion in the Making*, p. 126.

dogmas that are, I think, as applicable to the dogmas of science as to those of religion, as that "such precise expression is in the long run a condition for vivid realization, for effectiveness, for apprehension of width of scope and for survival." And then he takes up your point as to the implications of the words dogma, dogmatic, and dogmatist, and what he calls the "modern unfavorable implications" of these words. "The word 'dogma' originally," he continues, "means an 'opinion,' and thence more especially a 'philosophic opinion.'" In that sense it can be applied equally well to the views of philosophers, scientists, or religious teachers.

Moth. Yes, I see.

Fath. But you haven't yet been specific as to what you refer to as the dogmas of science. Do you mean that science makes unverifiable statements concerning Space, Time, and Motion?

Psych. That's just what I do mean. But instead of elaborating this idea in my own words as if it were a fantastic notion of my own, I'll read you a far more sweeping statement than I would have dared to give your wife, from a recent article on "The Dogmas of Science": "Scientific language is supposedly pure description. But it is pure description, and true explanation, I would have you observe, only in terms of certain dogmas first conceded it. Space, Time, Mass, Motion, Energy, in one or more of these indemonstrable concepts every single statement of the physicist is finally rendered. And just because scientists use these words continually, and because never is one explained save by falling back without delay upon another—does this not constitute the clearest evidence that without such words natural science could never function? Does it not make clear that scientists are concerned, not with defining the ultimate concepts that these words stand for,

but with describing human sensations merely in terms of them?

"In fine, does not all I have said convince you at last that dogmas are the starting-point of natural science? . . .

"Here, since the ideal of science is to explain all phenomena in terms of the motions and masses of particles, the dogmatic groundwork of natural science is made apparent. But even after we have granted the physicist his trinity of Space and Time and Motion, he will remain at a serious loss to justify many derivative dogmas." [1]

Fath. That makes me want to hear more. What does he suggest as derivative dogmas?

Psych. Views as to spontaneous generation, the ether, the transformation and dissipation of energy, and so forth.

Moth. You've been so kind about answering all my questions that at the risk of trying your patience, I'm going to ask you one more. Would you mind explaining just what the laws of the conservation and dissipation of energy really are?

Psych. The law of the conservation of energy affirms that energy is indestructible. But again, I'd rather let a scientist tell you in his own words: "That energy which disappears in one form reappears in another has been found to be universally true. Every physical change in nature involves a transformation of energy, but the total quantity of energy in the universe remains unaltered." [2]

Then, as a picture of the state of the world due to the working of this law, I know nothing more vivid than this description of Heyl's: "The energy of the universe is a restless, troubled sea. Transformation and retransforma-

[1] Winthrop Parkhurst, "Dogmas of Science," in *Psyche*, July, 1927, No. 28, p. 61.

[2] J. Arthur Thomson, *The Outline of Science*, Vol. I, pp. 284-285.

tion, crest and trough of the wave continually alternate; and according to the principle just stated, transformations into heat are complete, while the reverse takes place incompletely. As a consequence, the percentage of the energy of the universe which exists as heat is continually increasing, and at some time, however far in the future, all this energy will be in the form of heat, and all will have come to the same level of temperature everywhere. When this state of affairs is reached, further transformations of energy (as far as we know) will be impossible. The universe will resemble a great pool of Bethesda, awaiting some influence from without to trouble its waters, to disturb again the level of its vast store of useless energy, and render it once more available. Clausius calls this final state *Wärmetod* (death of heat); and the relentless process of degradation which leads up to it was called by Kelvin the 'dissipation of energy.' . . .

"The ancient myths of our Nordic race speak of the coming of a time when both gods and men shall sink into an endless dreamless sleep; when upon them all, both in Asgard and upon earth, shall descend the twilight, the evening, the everlasting night. This was called by the old Germans *Götterdämmerung*, 'The twilight of the gods.' In the language of the physicist, 'The entropy of the universe tends to a maximum, and its available energy to a minimum.' " [1]

Moth. That picture of the universe affects me powerfully, the idea that our laws of physics are one with the myth of the *Götterdämmerung.*

Fath. Myths are often nothing but symbols of generally valid human truths. Our so-called facts of science are no more than that.

Psych. Yes, and I agree with your wife that this par-

[1] Heyl, *Fundamental Concepts of Physics,* pp. 44-45.

ticular image of the running down of the universe to a dreamless sleep affects me too, in a strange way.

Fath. A kind of loss of consciousness is implied, isn't it?

Psych. Yes.

Moth. But then what is this consciousness we now have?

Psych. Don't you think that this same metaphor of a waking as contrasted with a sleeping state helps to describe what consciousness really is?

Fath. How so?

Psych. Well, when I am awake, I am aware of the beating of my heart, the position of my limbs. But when I am asleep, although my heart keeps on beating and my limbs retain or change their posture, I am then not aware, or conscious, of these things.

Fath. Oh, surely. I see your point now, that consciousness involves just that degree of difference we all know between being asleep and being awake.

Psych. Yes.

Moth. But we couldn't even talk to each other about consciousness if we hadn't each a special sense of individuality, of uniqueness in ourselves.

Fath. A sense of "I"-ness, so to speak.

Psych. Yes, without that sense of "I," of an implicit conviction of self-identity, we'd have no common basis for a discussion of consciousness.

Fath. But how much basis for such an assumption have we in any case in the work of the scientists themselves?

Psych. More perhaps than you might suppose. Conklin, for instance, in his volume *Heredity and Environment*, discusses the relation of our sense of identity with certain and particular cells in our brain which apparently remain unchanged while the rest of our body cells are constantly renewed through a lifetime.

Fath. That's exceedingly interesting. And it's exceed-

ingly important in relation to speculations and experiments concerning the location of consciousness in the brain. Will you read us that passage?

Moth. Yes, do.

Psych. "Finally there seems good reason for believing that the continuity of consciousness, the continuing sense of identity, is associated with the continuity of organization, for in spite of frequent changes of the material of which we are composed, our sense of identity remains undisturbed. However, the continuity of protoplasmic and cellular organization generally remains undisturbed throughout life, and the continuity of consciousness is associated with this continuity of organization, especially in certain parts of the brain. It is an interesting fact that in man, and in several other animals, which may be assumed to have a sense of identity, the nerve cells, especially those of the brain, cease dividing at an early age, and these identical cells persist throughout the remainder of life. If nerve cells continued to divide throughout life, as epithelial cells do, there would be no such persistence of identical cells, and one is free to speculate that in such cases there would be no persistence of the sense of identity." [1]

Fath. Yes. And through the ages, the interpretation of consciousness has depended on the way men regarded the relation of body and mind to each other. I've often thought that a history of civilization could be written from that angle, each culture interpreted according to whether it rested on an acceptance of a parallelism between mind and body, or on the priority of mind or body as the controlling force.

Psych. Yes. Always we have with us these three general views of man in relation to his body and his mind, with

[1] E. G. Conklin, *Heredity and Environment,* p. 54.

many variations on the theme, according to the period of culture and the type of the individuals who formulate the theory. But I'm not so sure that this body-mind phrase is really adequate for our present purpose, and for two reasons: first, we are the heirs of a civilization that has been torn and maimed by this contrast, this false duality, of mind and body, and secondly, the two words "body" and "mind" are not descriptively accurate terms for what we are discussing. What we want is words to contrast organism and "I"-ness or sense of identity.

Fath. You mean the word "mind" as distinct from "body" is not inclusive enough?

Psych. Yes. The distinction is too special. Mind is only a part of our "I," even though it is usually regarded as being one and the same. But popular speech often recognizes the way in which our sense of identity may be either one with or quite separate from our mind.

Fath. Yes. Such phrases as "being out of one's mind" or "beside oneself" carry that implication.

Psych. Mind is only one form of "I" consciousness. It certainly results from the relation of our "I" to our organism. But that relation between our sense of identity and our own bodies is not always mental in any strict sense.

Moth. I should say not! It is more frequently emotional or instinctive.

Psych. It will be interesting to see whether further work on the problem of consciousness leads to a more exact discrimination of types of consciousness corresponding to the relation between our "I" and our body, in mental, emotional, or instinctive terms.

Fath. Yes, I can see how that adds an interesting distinction, possibly justifying the modification of the terms of the mind-body categories as too limited in scope.

Moth. You seem to have suggested three ways in which our "I" can be related with organism, and those three forms of consciousness correspond, as I recall it, to the classification of types which you made in one of our former discussions.

Psych. Yes, it's the same grouping, for isn't it plausible that our "I" can have as many relationships with its own organism as there are or can be relations between organisms and organisms in the outer world?

Fath. Yes. It's a more complex way of regarding consciousness. I did not realize, until you just suggested this possibility of its three forms, that I too had always identified consciousness with mind alone.

Psych. At any rate, our sense of identity, "I"-ness, seems to have some sort of correspondence with elements in the brain.

Fath. That's the first description I've heard of our physiological structure that really helps to bridge the gap between the sense of "I" and a physical system located in the brain. I get a real thrill out of the realization that the physiological fact of the persistence of certain cells in our brain may correspond with that self-evident but undemonstrable sense of identity which accompanies each of us intermittently through our entire physical existence.

Psych. This whole problem of translating the correspondence between "I" and the brain into terms of modern physics is mapped out by Troland. He has a most interesting discussion of the question of the degree to which the object in consciousness resembles the physical object of our visual perception.

Moth. And what is the difference?

Psych. Well, you see the actual objects of the physical world. Take the chair on which you are sitting, or your hat—they are in substance, according to modern physics,

positive and negative electricity, while the chair or the hat that is in my consciousness consists of a color-image that includes qualities of light and shade. The physical chair is made up of moving particles separated by relatively enormous empty spaces, while the chair in consciousness, the visual chair, is not broken up, but is uniform in substance. And so, "in general," Troland concludes, "all the properties of the physical object which the physicist has been compelled to 'discover' are not manifest in the everyday visual representation." [1] No wonder. This problem of identity, of "I"-ness, is still so difficult. Even Troland, who has made the most adequate attempt in modern psychology to deal with this problem, suggests that the sense of identity and mental consciousness are one and the same thing. And yet there is a hint in the way that he ends his book that he may have guessed more than he is willing to state. I don't know whether you quite realize that this problem of values and the meaning of consciousness is one that psychologists who wish to be regarded as quite orthodox by the mass of their colleagues hesitate to grapple with. For I've noticed that scientists are rather fond of avoiding the question of values by saying that such matters belong to the province of philosophy and religion and not to science.

Moth. But what nonsense! The problem of values belongs not to religion or philosophy or science, but to the world of the living. Let the dead bury the dead!

Fath. I don't often hear you let fly like that! It touches you pretty deeply. I do think the world has been profoundly disappointed in Science as a substitute for other faiths. I've noticed recently how many books are coming from the press with such titles as *Science, the False Messiah* and *The Religion of Behaviorism,* and so on.

[1] Leonard T. Troland, *The Mystery of Mind,* p. 93.

Psych. Yes, and there is often an air of resentment or of mockery and disillusion in these books. The world is perhaps waking up to the fact that science, while looking one way, has been rowing another, and is now clad in the trappings of a religion, a special faith, with dogmas and cosmology of its own. As science deals with the nature of matter and the relation of the individual to the universe, perhaps it cannot, after all, escape from the question of values; and how amusing it becomes when we find science making overtures to religion by stating that whatever one's belief may be, the latest scientific data can be easily adapted to fit it! I'm afraid your wife will think I am again exaggerating.

Moth. I shouldn't be surprised.

Psych. Well, then, listen to this. Professor Piéron is referring to advances made by science, to which "beliefs will always adapt themselves. If it is a materialistic doctrine that seeks support from the new data, the adaptation presents no difficulty. But even a spiritualistic creed, if free to remold certain articles of faith, could well accept the facts now established. There will always be a sufficient residue of the unknown for scientific facts to be accommodated to the various systems of beliefs; and in any case the mind can always take refuge in a transcendental idealism."

Fath. That's as complete an admission as I've ever heard that the facts of science neither prove nor disprove a materialist or idealist doctrine, but can be used to support either faith.

Moth. With science as well as religion making wide claims with unsubstantiated hypotheses as to the relation of man to the universe, what foundation have we left on which to base our own lives and those of our children?

Psych. Well, we've allowed that behaviorism and Gestalt psychology, carried to the limit of their methods,

would constitute a complete physiological base for the study of behavior. But the laws and measurements of man's individual consciousness as related to his own body, as well as to the universe as a whole, would remain as enigmatical as ever.

Behaviorist psychology is, as we've noted, limited by the subjective bias of the individual human investigator. Shall we ever, I wonder, find a method of detaching ourselves sufficiently from identification with our own particular organism so that we may be able to observe and study its habits and its movements as impersonally as though it were not our own?

Fath. That would be interesting. But at present how do you feel about this problem of our existence?

Psych. Well, if this universe is indeed a cosmos and not a chaos, as we must believe, then the problem of consciousness must be to uncover and comprehend the laws governing the wider universe as well as the miniature world of our own selves. Our microcosmos and the vaster macrocosmos can be but parts of a great whole, bound together by the identity of their electrical structure. In as yet unfathomed ways, we and the universe must feed and form each other. But how the process began, what it is, what the scope of its vast design may be, remain mysteries that may eventually be revealed in further efforts to know ourselves.

Moth. Yes, to know our own little world completely, that we may ultimately penetrate the larger universe, that is indeed a challenge to the redoubling of all our efforts toward consciousness.

Ninth Dialogue

A Group of High-School Boys and Girls Chat After Lunch

Donald. Say, Jack, was that your mother visited our history class yesterday?

Jack. Yes. How did you guess? Spot a resemblance?

Don. Not specially. She's about the only one of the kids' mothers I didn't know by sight, I guess.

Ethel. She's beautiful, Jack. My mother used to be very handsome. But I tell her she's getting too heavy now.

Alice. But all women aren't meant to be so slender as Mrs. Hall.

Ethel. Well, I like women who are tall and willowy and dark-eyed and regal in their bearing.

Alice. Yes. The kind of princess in disguise that you dream of becoming. I know. You're always painting them and making up plays about these marvelous ladies. And of course you always shake a prince out of your sleeve at the right moment.

Ethel. Stop teasing and get ready for lab.

Don. Has it ever struck any of you how much the appearance and doings of our mothers come into our talks? We hardly ever speak of our fathers.

Jack. Well, there are a good many reasons for that, when you're young. My mother knows everything I do and is always interested. But my father seems to be so

buried in his business that we hardly see him except on Sundays. Then he tries to act interested in us. But it doesn't cut much ice with me. I guess when I'm older we may have something to talk about together.

Harry. I'm good friends with my father. We talk over everything. He's always interested in what's going on in school and makes my science and history much more worth while. He tells me what's going on in the world, all about politics, labor problems, international affairs.

Jack. Gee, you're lucky!

Alice. But there is another reason why all of us do notice and speak of the appearance of our mothers, when they come to school.

Jack. Well?

Alice. However much we talk about equality between men and women, I've noticed how much women have to sort of trade on their looks to get on in this world.

Jack. Oh, when they had no training, no brains!

Alice. No, I mean now. And I think I ought to know. I have the brains but not the looks. That's why I've got to hustle and be something worth while as soon as I grow up.

Don. Cut out that stuff, Alice. Just because you haven't Ethel's big black eyes or Ruth's bow-shaped mouth doesn't make you into a poor Cinderella. You've got pep and life in you. You've got all the stupid doll-faced sisters skinned a mile.

Alice. Thanks for your gallant defense. But I don't need it. Don't worry. I know my assets, and I'll make the most of them in this world before it hears the last of me.

Jack. You'll take care of yourself, all right, all right. No one need lose a night's sleep about you. There's a sort of lucky mixture in your make-up. You can pal with

the boys and whisper with the girls. Every one likes you, and whenever you get ready to run any crowd, both sexes included, it listens to you. You can run any shooting match you darn please, young lady.

Alice. The compensations for being an ugly duckling, eh?

Don. Not so bad. It seems to me that's the reason most men, except the very handsome ones whom women spoil anyway, want to do big things in the world; it's not just to do them, though that's fun too, but to get admiration, lots of it, from everybody.

Jack. Is that why you want to be a composer when you grow up?

Don. I can't help what's in me, that I live more in music than in any other way. But if I can please others while pleasing myself, so much the better.

But let's get back to this problem of fathers. It's been puzzling me for a long time. None of us ever spoke out frankly to each other about it before today. My father is like Jack's—never knows anything that I'm doing. He never shows the slightest interest in my feelings and my thoughts.

Ruth. Well, perhaps you and your mother are just naturally more sympathetic. Isn't she the temperamental one of your parents?

Don. Yes, that's so. It's from her I get my music. Dad's quite hard-boiled when it comes to the arts.

Jack. I suppose he'd like you to go into his business when you grow up.

Don. He's never really said that.

Jack. But if he wet-blankets all your dreams of becoming a great artist, isn't that enough to make you understand what he wants you to do?

Alice. Don't be a dumb-bell. You and your father just don't speak the same language.

Don. I guess that's so. I never put it to myself just that way. But Dad and my younger brother are as thick as two peas. He has a mechanical turn of mind. Practical as the devil.

Ethel. Sure, that's it. It's a matter of sympathy, understanding. I don't mean just by word-language. And it's not a matter of a parent of the same or opposite sex at all. You may happen to have either a father or a mother who understands you better. Or maybe neither. It all depends on type and temperament.

All my life until I was eight years old I was terribly lonely. I felt as though nobody in the world loved me. I spent my time with nurses and governesses. My father was hardly ever home, buried away in his laboratory. People meant nothing to him. Only chemicals were alive. He was that kind of a strange man.

My mother was to me at that time a marvelous far-away creature, swathed in beautiful clothes. When I had a glimpse of her, she seemed unreal, a make-believe mother. Not mine at all. I felt something deep and warm about her. And I tried to reach out, to have it touch me. But for years I never could.

When I was four years old I remember I cried one time to stay with my mother. But Nurse dragged me away and ducked me in the bath tub for being naughty. Wasn't that a terrible way to treat a child?

Alice. But now aren't you and your mother good friends?

Ethel. Yes, thank goodness! That terrible wall between us broke down at last. She changed toward me completely. It happened one spring, when I was nine years old. I'd been ill. She took me away to the country for a rest. For

the first time in our lives my mother and I were really alone together without any nurse or governess to interfere. That's when we both found out that we were the same kind of people. Perhaps we were so much alike that neither of us could open up to the other.

Alice. Yes, that must have been it. You are difficult to get to know, my dear. You hide behind your own silence.

Ethel. So does my mother.

Ruth. You have been talking all this time about mothers and fathers separately. But I find that as I begin to grow up, it's the mother-father combination that troubles me. I feel Mother and Father watching me out of the corner of their eyes. They are always analyzing and criticizing every gesture I make, every idea I express. I'm sick of it. Adolescence wouldn't be half so uncomfortable if parents didn't make it so. I know they've been reading too many of those books about the stormy period of adolescence.

Alice. You're right. It's not the modern child, it's the modern parent that makes all the difficulties in our adjustment.

Ruth. I don't know, though. How much is it our parents? And how much is it because we're in this new kind of school? Having an education that makes us sort of different from other children?

Jack. Look here, Ruth, I've always felt you really belonged in that French finishing school where you spent last year. Why don't you go back there? You haven't the individuality to make use of this kind of place. Your ideal is to be exactly like the rest of the crowd. There's nothing easier.

Ruth. That's just what I intend to do—go back to that French school next year. Then I shall be far away from my mother's jealous eye. She just wants to keep me down

as her "little girl," so she doesn't appear as old as she really is.

Harry. I think Ruth's attitude about the school is awfully superficial. She ought to be spanked.

Joe. Don't be absurd, Harry. Ruth can't help being flippant. She was born that way. It's the atmosphere of her home, you know. Whether she lives in it or goes away to boarding school, it's stamped on her for life.

Harry. But it hurts me to hear Ruth talk like that, just the same. She doesn't know a darn thing about life. Just picks off the sugar icing and walks away.

There's not one of you here ever been really poor, like me. You've never had to see your parents work hard and skimp to give their children the necessities of life. That does something to you. You never forget. Sometimes I feel that what I've been through makes me old enough to be the father of you all.

Jack. It must make a terrible difference. You always seem much older than any of us.

Harry. I didn't mean to speak about that, though, in answering Ruth. But it came to my lips, because, I suppose, it has an inevitable connection with how and why I came to this school on a scholarship last year.

You all know that my father is a well-known labor leader; so it was natural that I should have spent all the years I did in a public school. If it weren't for a lucky accident, I'd be there yet.

Don. You never told us much about your life before you came here. We all like you. You know that. We're all interested. And I'm sure I'm speaking for the others when I say that we'd like you to tell us what your public-school experience was like.

Alice. Yes, Harry. Do. It makes me feel so limited, so

almost provincial, to feel that one has been in one kind of school all one's life, even if it's a very modern one. One really needs to know what is going on in the rest of the world. You could be a big help to us all if you'd tell us how they really run things in a public school. How you felt while you were there. And what makes the difference to you personally between your life here and in P.S. 19.

Jack. If you'll do that, Harry, I'll read you part of a letter Jerry just sent me from prep school. His first impressions of life there. It's good stuff.

Alice. Fine! We'll have a kind of symposium on education conducted by the specimens themselves, instead of by their fond parents or teachers. All those in favor say aye.

Chorus. Aye.

Alice. The motion is carried. You begin, Harry. And maybe you'll let us ask you questions as you go along.

Harry. Sure. That'll make it easier for me.

Sometimes since I've been in this school, I've been kind of shocked at the way you all take the good things that come your way so much for granted. Of course I'm beginning to understand now that things in your lives have never been very different from the way they are now; I mean physically comfortable and easy. So you've never imagined what it would be like to live in other kinds of homes and go to other kinds of schools, I'm sure.

Ethel. I've often suffered spiritually, needed love and understanding that I didn't get. But to go without food, be hungry! Never have beautiful things around you! It would be terrible. My imagination is a poor substitute for that fact.

Jack. But we're quite unable to imagine what a regular public school is like. We've had some explanation from

teachers and visitors, or from our friends who make fun of us for going to a "queer" school. But none of us have had the first-hand experience.

Alice. Yes, Harry, how about that point? Do you think this school queer? Do you think we're queer? Tell us the truth now, we really want to know.

Harry. Queer? Not a bit of it. Probably what bothers some people when they first get to know you is that you're not so docile and subservient to orders as most school kids our age. You've had a chance here to try and make and do and discuss and study all kinds of things. So that now at fourteen and fifteen most of you have a pretty fair idea of what you can and can't do.

Ruth. But is that so unusual?

Harry. Is it? Go to any regular high school and see for yourself. Ask a class of kids our age there whether they have any idea what they want to do when they grow up.

Don. I'm sure most of them would have *imagined* things they wanted to do.

Harry. Oh, but there's a big difference between dreaming dreams of what you'd like to be when you grow up and getting a real chance to try out whether you have the skill or ability to do a thing or not. The course of study is so carefully mapped out in a formal school that you just have to put your nose to the grindstone and go through with it. If you have any special interests in the arts or in science or in anything else, you'll just have to postpone all that until school is over.

Jack. I suppose we have taken our advantages for granted without realizing it. But it has seemed so natural to us to have certain hours set aside each week when we can sort of specialize in subjects that most interest us. It's difficult to imagine what a formal school program is like. Though now that most of us have got to get ready for

college entrance examinations, the screws will be put on more and more, I suppose.

Harry. Yes. But that's the College Entrance Board. Not this school's fault. They'd go on giving us a good all-round education if they could. But as long as the colleges make the foolish entrance requirements they do, why, a school like this has got to meet them. Even when they know better.

Joe. My father says the time is coming, though, when these new schools, that are more interested in whole human beings than in examination results, will be able to force their standards on the colleges.

Harry. I'm afraid that's still a long way off.

Joe. But lots of my father's friends, professors at some of our big universities, agree with him. They've visited this school, and I've heard them say we kids here think more for ourselves than their own students do.

Jack. Well, that fits in with Jerry's comment on his new prep-school pals. He writes, "I haven't found two boys in the whole place who think for themselves." He adds, "Of course the way this school is run, no one gets any time to think for himself. But even if there was time, it doesn't strike me as though they'd think here anyhow."

Harry. What Jerry writes, and all you've been saying, just back up the point I want to make about this school. In our class there's a bunch of fifteen boys and girls. We may not know for sure what we'll be when we're older. But we do know by now a good many things we won't be.

Don. Say, the other day we were listing what our class thought they'd do when they grew up. As I remember it, the list included one doctor, one lawyer, one engineer, one social worker, a scenic or costume designer, an actress, a composer, a painter, two writers, three or four scientists, and one for business or advertising.

Harry. I know a lot of you may change your minds. But at least you have a sense of direction. And we won't waste as much time later on as most people have to in order to find out what they're really fit for in the world outside.

Jack. I'm sure a boy like James will never change. He's sure to go on and become a famous ornithologist. Birds are the only thing in life that really counts for him. He'll get up any day at five in the morning to go to the park in the spring when the birds are coming north again.

Do you remember when he was only ten years old, how he got the idea into his head that he and Richard, who was his bird pal at that time, ought to try and join the Linnean Society? Of course, like other scientific organizations it didn't admit children as members. But he and Richard shot off a letter to the secretary explaining that they'd outgrown all those junior science clubs and would like to join the Linnean Society itself.

Harry. I never heard that story. Did they get in?

Jack. Oh, better than that! The Society holds open meetings at the Museum of Natural History. So James invites his mother to come with him to the next meeting. They go and hear his letter read aloud and seriously considered. The final upshot of the graybeards' discussion is that our two boys may be the great ornithologists of the future and should therefore be encouraged and accepted as full-fledged members.

Harry. That's a great story. In a regular school children don't get time, don't get the encouragement, to develop a passionate enthusiasm for a science or an art or whatever it is that they most care about. Here our interests, our abilities, are treated with respect. We're not just children to be pushed through a required course of study.

Chorus. Oh, dear, there goes the bell.—Ten minutes to get ready for lab!

Harry. There's some free time again after lunch tomorrow.

Alice. Let's go on with our talk then.

Chorus. Fine!—All right!—Let's.

Harry. But isn't there just a minute's time now to hear what Jerry has to say? Jack promised us that.

Jack. Oh, all right. I'll just read you a bit of the letter in a hurry. You remember he was sort of thrilled at going off to a prominent prep school when he left us this year. He swanked a bit. Felt as though, now, he was going to be a real fellow out in the world. And this is what he writes:

"The truth is that I am continually and intensely bored. There is absolutely no correlation of the different subjects with each other or with anything else, and there is very little that is interesting purely for its own sake when completely isolated from everything else. The physics, German, and geometry are almost purely memorizing processes, while only the reading is of interest in English. In every subject we could be learning more, considering the amount of work we do." [1]

Harry. Why, it's just what I've been criticizing about the public schools! Where's the difference, I wonder!

[1] A real letter from a real boy at a prep school.

Tenth Dialogue

A Public-School Teacher and the New-School Teacher

Public-School Teacher. This morning spent in your school has rather disturbed me.

New-School Teacher. Really!

P.S.T. Oh, you're surprised, I suppose. You are used to such a school atmosphere.

N.S.T. I wasn't always. I've been here three years now. But before that, I too went through a public-school experience. What is it that troubles you about this school? Perhaps the unexpected animation and activity of the pupils? It's so different, I know, from the quiet of the ordinary school.

P.S.T. Yes, partly that. But I find things that startle me.

N.S.T. Do you mean that you thought you'd find here a school that would in no way concern you as a teacher in the public-school system?

P.S.T. That's just where the surprise came in. I planned to visit today just to see one of these "queer" schools that are being talked about nowadays. I thought it might be amusing after the drudgery and routine of my own school work. It was good just to get out and see some other school. That's how I came here. I admit that I did expect some kind of eccentric experiment. I never im-

agined that you teachers would be so much like me. That you too would have gone through the mill of normal-school training and public-school teaching. And that only from dissatisfaction with the formal schools did you eventually arrive at this freer work.

You see, I've known for years how little of all that I had dreamt of doing I have been able to accomplish in education. The system runs you up a blind alley, and the political game uses the schools as pawns; so, long ago, I gave up hope. Can you then, I wonder, realize what this morning's visit has done to me?

N.S.T. Something positive or negative?

P.S.T. Oh, I haven't the detachment at present to measure it in that way! All I know is that I feel as if I had been caught up in an elemental disturbance like an earthquake or a tornado! What I've seen happening this morning goes contrary to every preconception I ever had about teaching. There were heretofore certain principles I never doubted as the corner stone of education. It's true, as you suggested, the loud talking and the activity among children at work did bewilder me tremendously at first. But gradually I saw that it was no idle fooling and that this spontaneity enhanced the work they were doing. That was my first shock. And the second came when I realized the displacement of the teacher from her position of complete authority in a classroom.

N.S.T. But why should that have disturbed you, if you remained sure that the old methods were right?

P.S.T. That's just it. What I saw in some of the classes made it impossible for me to ignore any further the inadequacy of the teacher as taskmaster and disciplinarian.

N.S.T. I groaned under that burden myself for a long time. It comes at first as a shock to one's vanity, to see the teacher no longer the absolute monarch.

P.S.T. The strain and dislike of driving children to lessons, year after year, proved too much for me at one time. I was still imagining an ideal school where life could be expansive and joyous for teachers as well as children. Then I became very ill. I used to lie in a semi-comatose state and wonder how I would ever pull myself out of bed to teach again. Then when I finally went back, I succeeded only by forgetting my dreams of what a school might be. And now I come into this place today, and it stirs up buried memories and unfulfilled hopes.

N.S.T. Does it make you sorry you've come?

P.S.T. Not exactly that. I can't tell yet whether I'll end up by being glad or sorry. Just now, I'm upset and puzzled. Do you mind if I start plying you with questions?

N.S.T. Of course not. So long as I can satisfy you by my answers.

P.S.T. I hope you won't think my inquiries too absurd. But I have an impression that so much is in constant flux in this type of school that it makes me feel dizzy. Give me at least the basis of your program for the work. With that as a definite and fixed point to start from, I may gradually come to understand how the teachers in such a school are able to stay in the background and yet teach, without seeming to do so in the old way.

N.S.T. I'm afraid I'm going to disappoint and disturb you again. Our program is not as you expect, neatly arranged ahead of time. For instead of regarding a school and its organization as a crystallized and permanent form, we consider it as a dynamic and ever-changing organism.

P.S.T. But even so, as a practical working proposition, you simply must have a school program, settled in advance. Before a school term opens, I mean. Otherwise

it's impossible for you to begin to teach a class anything definite. Isn't that so?

N.S.T. Not quite. We have a plan; yes, indeed. But it's general. We decide on a certain minimum that must be accomplished in each field of work for the term. But with interest aroused and an opportunity for much individual work, our children generally cover more ground than the pupils of a formal school. We have a general scheme of work mapped out for a class, but what will surprise you is that in a subject like social science, we are often prepared to adopt several possible methods of approach. The one selected is likely to depend on the mental make-up, general interests, and temper of a new class.

P.S.T. Do you mean to say that you really vary your subject matter in a given class according to the kind of children that happen to be in it?

N.S.T. Why, yes. That is part of the purpose of this type of school. We mean to make the school fit the needs of the children, and not the children fall in with the requirements of the school.

P.S.T. But to make the principle clearer, could you explain to me how you could suddenly change the way of teaching a subject like social science according to the interests of a class? In my experience, you either teach a subject or you don't. And it ought to be planned with textbook references and lecture material completely arranged beforehand. Then the success of the teaching can be tested later by the examination at the end of the year.

N.S.T. Well, you see, we don't ever make examinations the ultimate test of what a child knows. It's the way he goes about his work during the year and the kind of original research work that he does on his own responsibility which count in this school. We don't have regular text-

books in most of our classes. We train the children to use a library. We expect them to go to original sources for reference. This holds true for work in history or English as well as social science. Every child undertakes to do some special piece of original work on some phase of the subject on which the group is engaged. We don't encourage an entire class to produce the identical piece of work. We prefer that students write their essays on different subjects. By a mutual exchange they then get the benefit of each other's work in different fields. Instead of invariably organizing their research work into the form of a paper, pupils may choose, on occasion, to arrange their material into talks or class discussions of special topics. And the boy or girl whose report or lecture is being questioned may take charge of the class for that conference, and I become part of the group for the time being.

P.S.T. You seem to treat your pupils almost as though they were adults.

N.S.T. Well, don't they seem more mature in their efforts at work and their sense of responsibility than many adults you have seen?

P.S.T. I must admit that they do.

N.S.T. It's no accident that we allow them this greater responsibility and independence of action. For, as you recognized, this school is the product of a plan that differs from any with which you have heretofore been familiar. That's because we are convinced that children are not so childish as adults suppose, nor on the other hand are adults themselves as adult as they like to imagine. It's just the immaturity of most adults that prevents the normal growth of many children. For parents and teachers demand from them too swift, too external an adjustment to adult standards. Boys and girls should be given more time to live in their own terms in a child's world.

P.S.T. You puzzle me. There seems a contradiction in what you've said. First of all, you declare adults are more childish than children, and then you say that adults don't give children a chance to live out their own lives as children.

N.S.T. But these statements are both true, and not incompatible. First we must find means to enable parents to grow up. For the type of education that here concerns us includes certain fundamental adjustments and transformations in the teachers and parents as well as the pupils.

P.S.T. No wonder, then, that I myself was disturbed by so many fresh and unexpected experiences in this environment. But tell me more about the way in which this school has come to be so different from those I have been used to. For I don't begin to understand what I see happening all around me.

N.S.T. Well, you could hardly expect to, all at once, since you've been immersed all these years in the formal school that depends on a lifeless psychology.

P.S.T. But this new psychology on which you base your work here? Can you introduce me to its principles? Can you point out in what way it differs from the psychology we were all taught in the training schools?

N.S.T. I'll gladly make an attempt. There isn't much time, but perhaps you do know something already about psychoanalysis.

P.S.T. Oh, is that the foundation of your educational methods? I'm rather surprised. All I've heard about it came from teachers of special classes in the public schools. I got the impression that it dealt with abnormal or neurotic, not with normal, children. So I never paid much attention. I never dreamt it had any relation to my kind of teaching.

N.S.T. I think that most parents as well as the majority of teachers still have that attitude toward the new psychology of which the best-known branch is psychoanalysis. But it really concerns itself with deep and interior mechanisms of all human beings, normal as well as abnormal, children as well as adults. One of its most important discoveries was that the gradations from normal to neurotic are so slight as to be often indistinguishable. Our standards, therefore, of what is normal for human beings at all stages of education and of life, need serious revision. Psychoanalysis has shown that neurotics who live in a world of fantasy and imagination are only doing just what we all do in our periods of daydream and revery. Artistic creators are therefore only those who succeed in transforming their private world of fancy into the workaday world of reality by means of paint, plaster, and word-forms. The complete neurotic, you see, remains altogether fixed within this unreal world, and finds no path of return to our concrete world of physical reality. The difference, then, between a neurotic and a normal person becomes one only of degree, and not of kind. Most of the so-called normal people are in the same boat with the neurotic who has failed to make a satisfactory adjustment to life in this world. And psychoanalysis makes some interesting revelations as to the causes of our commonest maladjustments.

P.S.T. I'd like to hear more about it.

N.S.T. Well, it pictures us as living a kind of double life. One in the world of our dreams and fancies, the other in this ordinary world of practical reality. And this disharmony of function in all of us relates to the mechanisms of two psychological systems, the conscious and the unconscious. Until recent times, man considered himself as a conscious and independent being. Modern science

reduced him by its implacable determinism to a very small place in the sun. This earlier physiological determinism has been reinforced by many recent trends in psychology. Among them, analysis, you see, suggests that the major portion of our emotional life is not visible on the surface of existence. Yet symptoms of its hidden activity break through constantly. By means of these we are able to read other people as well as ourselves. But our interpretations are superficial and only partially correct. For we live, in truth, like great icebergs, with our unconscious emotional life buried in the depths; only a fragment of its surface ever exposed to the outer air. This applies, according to the analysts, to every normal, average human being. Such a one can glibly explain what he is doing and why he is doing it. But at bottom these superficial explanations do not give the true motives, the underlying wishes that lead him to act as he does. And analysts define as "rationalizations" all those polite explanations a man gives to cover his hidden motives. By that they don't refer to the mere excuses every one of us makes to others for his none too noble or too unselfish responses, but to those very handsome explanations by which we succeed in fooling ourselves as to our own real reason and primitive purpose. We put this hoax over on ourselves by the simple method of not letting the conscious know what the unconscious is really doing.

P.S.T. By what means is this separation of the conscious and unconscious supposed to occur?

N.S.T. Why, the analysts explain it by the psychological mechanism they call the "censor." In the course of time, from infancy through childhood to maturity, we all of us exhibit primitive animal impulses. The forces of the world play upon us, imposing slowly but surely their standards and their traditions. These tend to suppress in-

stinctive animal responses, which remain active, if no longer visible, as the driving power of our lives. Civilization, from the analytic viewpoint, is an attempt to harness this primal force or energy into higher forms of cultural activity. The censor is then that mechanism which plays up to these standards of civilization and says "Thou shalt not" to these instinctive wishes of our unconscious, as they try to break through the limitations imposed by our code of civilization.

P.S.T. You suggest that our unconscious consists of an interplay of opposing wishes. That seems easily possible. But are there signs of these wishes to be found cropping up in all our daily actions?

N.S.T. Yes. To those who have the clues to the language of the unconscious, nothing is more obvious. There are volumes written to show how slips of the tongue and ordinary wit and humor reveal the undercurrents of human lives.

But this language of the unconscious does not manifest the ordinary logic of word and phrase. It may, however, express itself in speech, in gesture, in tones of the human voice, in daydreams, night dreams, and all types of artistic expression. In any form of life which contains the stamp of man's feeling, thought, or action, it speaks symbolically. The laws of the unconscious are based on no logic of the rational. For its patterns spring from the hidden wishes of the individual and find fulfillment in the life of fantasy and creative expression.

P.S.T. And what then is the deepest wish in all of us?

N.S.T. Some form of the desire for power and control. What form the wish may take depends largely on the type, temperament, and early surroundings of each individual.

P.S.T. Do you mean to imply that every one is after

power in some form or other? And that it is the real motive force of our lives?

N.S.T. I do.

P.S.T. How unidealistic you are!

N.S.T. Or perhaps how realistic.

P.S.T. I know so many unworldly people. Absolutely unselfish. Their entire existence a living proof that they despise this worldly power.

N.S.T. I think you misunderstand me. I speak of power in all its manifestations, not mere worldly power, as the motive force in human existence. To some, it is desirable to attain power over realms of the spiritual, or the human. Such power may mean more than any control of temporal goods.

Now, your friends whom you cited as sacrificing their lives for others. Can't you see that theirs was a way of gaining such power? The councilor behind a throne is often more powerful than his more visible sovereign. The self-sacrificing person may be unconscious that he acts so in order to control another, or that he often makes a virtue of sacrifice to mask his own failure in the world.

P.S.T. But again, you are disturbing just those few fundamental values that I used to take for granted.

N.S.T. Psychoanalysis, since it tries to probe to the root of our motives, lets us take nothing for granted. The surface explanation it regards as a cover or defense for the deeper causes of conduct.

But nature remains unconcerned. To her, man is just one of the forces in the equilibrium of the universe. So long as he reproduces after his kind and supplies a certain amount of energy in needed forms, nature remains indifferent to his further strivings. What does she care about any of his efforts to understand or direct himself more consciously?

P.S.T. Modern science looks at the whole universe in terms of such energy?

N.S.T. Yes, potential energy. And human lives are one of its forms. But my point is, that to nature the suffering, conflicts and struggles within our human cycle interfere in no way with her purpose, though they may seriously interfere with our own development as human beings.

P.S.T. I never imagined nature as pitted against man in that sense.

N.S.T. Well, nature's aim and man's are not necessarily the same.

P.S.T. There's no doubt that most of the people I know are not at one with nature. They all have difficulty in adjusting their lives. I feel it in my own. I suppose just that state of unrest is what has turned the interest of many laymen to psychoanalysis.

N.S.T. Probably. Psychoanalysis has at any rate some definite suggestions as to novel methods of unlocking and redirecting our store of psychic energy. The analysts themselves, while agreeing on a dynamic conception of this primal energy, don't agree as to the exact source of its power, nor as to the most adequate mode of channeling it.

P.S.T. So the analysts, like all other groups, have split into various factions.

N.S.T. Yes. But the details of the schism needn't concern us now. What matters for the moment is to make clear to you how our actions are directed by motives of which we are rarely conscious. This means that we are simply slaves to the control of this buried power in ourselves.

P.S.T. Can anything be done about it by means of education? Can we ever master this power for our own purposes?

N.S.T. That is just what this school is intent upon accomplishing.

P.S.T. Tell me how it can be done. I want to understand.

N.S.T. Well, I can't go into the entire philosophy and technique of this school organization; but I'll try to tell you how this view of human life as manifestation of unconscious and conflicted wishes can lead to a new attitude toward the problem of education.

You see, to us the significant element is not mere intellectual training. For we know only too well that unconscious feelings direct our external responses, and what a person is capable of doing in school or in life is related to the inward state of his being.

P.S.T. If that is so, this new psychology would strike at the foundations of our present system of education.

N.S.T. It does, I think, just that. But nevertheless it will probably take another generation before the implications of psychoanalytic procedure begin to dislodge our present methods.

P.S.T. I won't ask you to give me any more detailed explanation of its theories now. I want to read some books on it for myself. But can you give me any more definite idea of how the discovery of the unconscious can be related to the education of children?

N.S.T. I want to try. But in order to do so, I think I'd better elaborate two of the fundamental concepts on which psychoanalysis is based. I mean the concept of the Pleasure and Reality principles. I've already suggested how we gain satisfaction from our inner world of fantasy and imagination. This, according to Freud, is associated with the Pleasure principle. But I think I'd better read you just how he himself describes the evolution of these fundamental ideas:

"In the psychology which is founded on psychoanalysis, we have accustomed ourselves to take as our starting-point the unconscious mental processes with the peculiarities of which we have become acquainted through analysis. These we consider to be older, primary processes, the residues of a phase of development in which they were the only kind of mental processes. The sovereign tendency obeyed by these primary processes is easy of recognition; it is called the pleasure-pain principle, or more shortly the pleasure principle. These processes strive toward gaining pleasure; from any operation which might arouse unpleasantness ('pain'), mental activity draws back ('repression'). Our nocturnal dreams, our waking tendency to shut out painful impressions, are remnants of the supremacy of this principle and proofs of its power.

"In presupposing that the state of mental equilibrium was originally disturbed by the peremptory demands of inner needs, I am returning to lines of thought which I have developed in another place. In the situation I am considering, whatever was thought of (desired) was simply imagined in an hallucinatory form, as still happens today with our dream-thoughts every night. This attempt at satisfaction by means of hallucination was abandoned only in consequence of the absence of the expected gratification, because of the disappointment experienced. Instead, the mental apparatus had to decide to form a conception of the real circumstances in the outer world and to exert itself to alter them. A new principle of mental functioning was thus introduced; what was conceived of was no longer what was pleasant, but that which was real, even if it should be unpleasant. This institution of the *reality principle* proved a momentous step."

And a little further on Freud continues, "Education can without further hesitation be described as an incite-

ment to the conquest of the pleasure principle, and to its replacement by the reality principle." [1]

P.S.T. Does Freud mean that gradually, through the process of education, the child should give up the subjective world of myth and magic and learn to accept the concrete and objective world of science?

N.S.T. Yes, and yet not quite that. For none of us ever does or should relinquish entirely his world of fantasy and imagination. All of our dreams are dreamed and all of our visions born within those secret inner places to which we have recourse when dissatisfied with our external lives. Inevitably, you see, the pleasure principle persists in the realm of fancy. The problem of education is not to deny its existence, but rather, as I understand, to guide such energic force into channels of creative expression. This will be of value to both the individual and society.

P.S.T. Pleasure, then, as an aim in school activities, should be encouraged, from the analytic viewpoint?

N.S.T. Yes, certainly. But not at the expense of a true adjustment to a real world. Pleasure in work is now recognized as a physiological necessity to the maximum human development, by physiologists as well as psychologists. As a modern educational principle it is simply reinforced by the findings of analysis. But self-expression and joy in work are not a stumbling-block but a prop in guiding the individual to a more conscious fulfillment of his social obligations in the outer world.

P.S.T. So the problem of the child is not dissimilar to that of the adult. He must relate the satisfaction of his imagination to the world of reality.

N.S.T. Yes, that's so. And education has not been sufficiently aware of its responsibility in this matter. The

[1] Sigmund Freud, *Collected Papers*, pp. 13-14.

school must finally lead the imagination of children to flower individually in the arts, the sciences, and the usual academic subjects as well. When it accepts this responsibility, human beings will come to maturity as adults in an adult world of reality.

P.S.T. Maybe that is so. But I still don't see how psychoanalysis enters as a technique in a modern school.

N.S.T. I have suggested something of its dynamic view of life, reducing its essential force to what is known as the "libido theory." The practical problem, from the analytic viewpoint, in all human lives, is the adequate channeling of this energy into positive forms of work and personal expression. Civilization, for the analyst, is the result of infinite transformations of our primal energies into higher forms of cultural expression. This is called "sublimation." Education becomes in all civilization a practical means to such change. But analysis concerns itself with the individuals as well as the social group who make up society. And one of its most important efforts in releasing the personality of children depends on freeing them from the excessive bonds of parental attachment.

P.S.T. Do you mean that this is one of our serious problems in education?

N.S.T. Yes. That's what psychoanalysis stands or falls by. The entire family pattern of mother-father-child leaves an indelible stamp on all our lives. According to our parents' relation to each other and to ourselves as children is the design of our future life controlled.

P.S.T. That sounds like the prediction of our doom.

N.S.T. It would be that bad, had we not found means of modifying those early childhood influences. With a modern school environment and recent psychological methods we can modify the early determinants of individual response.

Take, for instance, the many examples of the spoiled child. On him has been lavished the excessive devotion and abundant petting of mother or nurse or both. Why has the child received more than a normal and healthy share of emotional attention? There may be a dozen answers, depending on the given family relationships. But one thing is certain, if the emotion spent on the child is more than is good for it, attention should be turned to the adults. For the cause of maladjustment lies within those who surround the child, and it ought to be remedied at the source.

P.S.T. But if a mother or a nurse has, as you suggest, lived a starved emotional life and found her release in the care and love of a child, that seems to me a perfectly normal and natural response. What can psychoanalysis do to change it? Or why should it try?

N.S.T. I am not suggesting that there should be an inhibition of feeling in the relation of parents or nurses to young children. You miss my point. I say that if a child is receiving more affection than is healthy to its normal development, such overdemonstrativeness should be prevented. One can show intelligent parents or nurses how to redirect part of their emotion into paths that are personally more productive and healthier to themselves as well as to the children whom they love.

I ought here to include the teacher among those who may not be able to regulate emotional reactions in a way that is appropriate to the needs of her various pupils. My point is that blocked, unsatisfied, or misdirected emotion in adults inevitably interferes with the normal development of children to whom they are related. So that the great problem in education is to help those who have this responsibility to become more aware of themselves. Only then can they begin to deal consciously with education.

P.S.T. That I admit.

N.S.T. Take our own profession. Teachers are all too ready to play on the personal responses of pupils to gain power and affection, without realizing its consequences. But most of them dissociate their personal life from their teaching. That is the theory and the tradition of all the training schools. But, in fact, it can't be done. A teacher or a parent has got to know himself before he can truly understand or handle others.

I'm not going to try to outline the typical ways in which our emotional life is blocked by the family patterns of our childhood. You can look all that up for yourself. In order to consider the application of this new psychology to the teacher and the pupils, I should summarize the family problem in this way: Every child, as he enters our school, repeats the design of his typical family response in the environment of his classroom. If he is an only child, used to having his own way, the degree of free organization of activities allows this to appear; if, on the other hand, he is the youngest of a family and used to being dominated and controlled by stronger and older children, he will tend to place himself in just such a relationship to his school companions; again he repeats the family pattern. Similarly, children will relate themselves to their teachers as they have to their parents. I have, I'm afraid, oversimplified the problem in attempting to generalize it.

P.S.T. But again, I ask, since I am ready to follow you this far without denying that much which you say seems plausible, what can a teacher do with such facts after she has recognized them?

N.S.T. That's exactly what I'm leading up to now. Unfortunately you are not familiar enough with psychoanalysis for me to consider the problem in detail. I can again only suggest a direction. You will, for the moment,

simply have to follow my argument. For you to check up on what I am saying would involve a long and serious consideration of the technique of the new psychology and the organization of this new school.

A teacher who has been trained to understand the mechanisms of *her own* unconscious life is in a position to handle children in a fundamental way. She is able to interpret and sift the unconscious from the conscious responses of a child. She is aware of the failure of external discipline and formal class lessons to orient the inner life of any human being. She knows how in the early years of school to help a child to substitute the life at school for that of the home. And the analyzed teacher of young children is quite aware that she must make herself the emotional substitute for the mother.

P.S.T. Doesn't any good teacher of little children respond instinctively as a mother to her class?

N.S.T. Of course. But my point is that instinctive responses that are unconscious may do more harm than good. A teacher who mothers children primarily for her own satisfaction may do them more harm than good. She has got to be so clear and inwardly centered that she can give children the response *they* need from her, *consciously*, and not draw on them unconsciously for herself. Don't you see the distinction?

P.S.T. I do. But there's still a point that puzzles me.

N.S.T. What is it?

P.S.T. I can see why these new schools should put a lot more emphasis on the arts, just because the formal schools have neglected them. I suppose the development of imagination, creative expression, and initiative is more important than I ever realized before. But I nevertheless do resent scrapping all the treasures of the past, all that knowledge which is only available through recourse to

tradition. I still think the formal school is right in making education depend on what is locked in books.

N.S.T. I'm glad you brought us back to that general problem before you left. You remain then the defender of education by means of the printed word, versus education through experience. We'd both agree, however, that some of each is necessary, even though we stress opposite elements as primary. But you may be surprised when I say that I don't think the problem lies, for the future, in the mere selection of one or other of these tendencies as preferable. It may be more serious than that. And what I am about to say is no idiosyncrasy of either the new psychologist or the new school teacher. It is, in fact, the serious conclusion of noted anthropologists and palaeontologists as to the present and future potentialities of man.

Do you know that men like Sir Arthur Keith and Henry Fairfield Osborn conclude from their careful examination of the brain cavities of the skull of ancient man that his brain capacities were almost equal to ours?

P.S.T. Impossible!

N.S.T. Nothing of the kind. I just wish you'd glance at some of this material. It gives one a healthy shock to realize that about four-fifths of our brain has at present no function whatsoever, and that our type of life and education is swiftly reducing even that which remains to almost nothing at all.

P.S.T. Who says that?

N.S.T. Osborn. I'll just read you his summary of that idea:

"Contrasting the mental powers of early man and his daily use of these powers in all the occupations of life with the mental powers of modern man as exercised daily, we remark that a revolutionary change has been brought

about by civilization, resulting in the almost total disuse of these priceless primitive powers which undoubtedly still are ours. What the primitive youth constantly did for himself the modern youth allows others to do for him, thus squandering the best part of his heritage from ancestors of the Dawn Stone Age.

"The first and most serious indictment which may be brought against the present age is that whereas primitive man and the primitive boy and girl were dependent on their own efforts and the constant use of their mental powers, we are today increasingly dependent on the gifted few whose labors are multiplied a thousand- or a million-fold by various mechanical devices, so that our inherited primitive powers are being dwarfed through disuse.

"Our brains are somewhat larger than those of the man of the Dawn Stone Age, but only a very small portion of the modern brain is being put to use. Consequently, promising and full of potentiality as our brains may be in infancy, full of equipment for observation, for reflection, and perhaps for creation, these potentialities are seldom availed of. Thus these powers suffer daily diminution, until as life goes on they entirely disappear. The daily life of hundreds of thousands, even of millions, of people consists of elaborate forms of eating, drinking, clothing, of care of the young, of household production, of imitation and observance of what others are doing, of reading the daily papers, of going to movies—a program requiring so little mental action that the development of the mind is brought to an absolute standstill.

"Accordingly, we Americans live complacently in the midst of borrowed art, of borrowed music, of a largely borrowed literature and history, and we manifest real creative power only in our wonderful mechanical inven-

tions for the physical welfare of man and for the communication of ideas." [1]

P.S.T. I never heard things stated that way before. I never dreamt that our civilization wasn't an improvement on the past in every direction. It sounds serious.

N.S.T. Bad enough, do you think, to force a few people to act?

P.S.T. Does Osborn mean that every significant power that characterizes man is deteriorating?

N.S.T. He states it unqualifiedly. He has a table here in the text in which he contrasts all the mental powers of primitive and modern man. And his general conclusion is that in resourcefulness, adaptation, initiative, observation, creation, invention, imagination, reflection, reason, recognition of cause and effect, and struggle for existence, he sees primitive man as infinitely our superior. To us he leaves superiority in but two characteristics, mechanical invention and the power of imitation. But the domination of machinery has sacrificed individual initiative, and our power to imitate, to follow herd suggestion, has made us the slaves of the social demagogue and the commercial exploiter. It's a cheerful picture, isn't it?

P.S.T. I don't want to believe it. But I'm afraid it may be true. It fits in with things I've known for years and tried to hide from myself. Even now I'd like to escape from its implications.

N.S.T. Why?

P.S.T. Oh, that's simple enough. I know that if I become absolutely convinced that men like Osborn and Keith are right, I can't go on much longer in this old way of teaching. I see now why you had to get out of the regular school system. I've had all I can stand for one day. Let me say good-by and think it over.

[1] Henry Fairfield Osborn, *Creative Education*, pp. 43-44.

Eleventh Dialogue

A Conventional Father and the Director

Father. I've come to spend the morning, if I may, since it's a holiday and my office is closed.

Director. We're delighted to have you. We keep the school open Election Day for just such fathers as you, who are otherwise unable to visit us.

Fath. I know I've been a long time getting here. My son has not hesitated to voice his disappointment and disapproval of my delinquency. He says that all the fathers of his classmates have spent mornings here before me.

Dir. I believe he's right.

Fath. But I'm surprised! Fathers never used to play such an active part in the schooling of their children. Not, at any rate, until their boys were older.

Dir. Well, that's one of the things this school encourages. And we take a good deal of pride in the enthusiastic support we win from fathers, as well as mothers, in carrying out our program.

Fath. I suppose you mean that you like to have fathers serve on your Board of Trustees and do that sort of thing.

Dir. Oh, we have mothers as well as fathers in that capacity. I mean that we also want fathers, as fathers, to become concerned in the education of their offspring. Some

of them are not yet sure how far it is compatible with their masculine dignity to admit this interest. You, I'm convinced, are really quite as concerned as your wife in the development of your children.

Fath. Of course I am. But there isn't much I can do about it before they're older. The girl is only eight and the boy twelve.

Dir. I don't agree with you. At any age you've an important rôle to play. I wish you had come and talked this over with me several years ago. Why didn't you visit the school sooner? I know you are a busy man. But one is never too busy to do what seems necessary or worth while.

Fath. That's true enough. I'll be frank with you, though I suppose you already know from my wife that I kept away because I was skeptical of this new-fangled education. She had her wish. I allowed her to send the children to you. I know she is intelligent and has given more thought and attention to these problems than I have. She can tell you I was never much in sympathy with the plan. Only of late can I see some surprising developments in my son—enough to convince me that there is, after all, something fundamentally sound in your methods. I confess to this change of heart. I want you to show me whatever you think might give me a better sense of the school as a whole. And I also want to ask you some questions about the philosophy behind your methods. I realize that even if I could spend as long as a week here, it would not be enough to round out the picture. And since I can't, won't you act as guide and let me see all that is possible within a single brief morning?

Dir. Good! We'll start right off. And I'll welcome questions, comment, or criticism as we move along. It's best that we fit in our talk with classroom visits. Otherwise we'll miss work that I'd especially like you to see.

Fath. That's a good idea. What shall we see first?

Dir. You might be interested in the election campaign that is taking place in your son's class.

Fath. Do these twelve-year-old children follow the present course of city politics seriously enough for that?

Dir. Let's step inside that room and you'll see for yourself.

[Father and Director enter classroom as a political mass meeting is being staged. Republican posters hang behind the two speakers who harangue the crowd in true politician style, while the rest of the class questions and applauds the speakers. The bulletin board of the room is covered with current newspaper clippings of the campaign. To his delight, this father sees quotations from his own campaign speech among them.]

Fath. But have all these children decided on being Republicans?

Dir. Oh, no! Nothing of the kind. They run a campaign meeting for every party. Or they have debates between the candidates.

Fath. That's awfully good. It makes the problems of politics seem real. Doesn't it?

Dir. Yes, that's what we try for in all the subjects which the children study.

Fath. I noticed the girls were just as much interested as the boys.

Dir. And why not? All our boys and girls take part in the various studies. As they get older there tends to be some increase of specialization.

Fath. Would you say that there is much divergence in the interests of boys and girls?

Dir. The current conventions and prejudices of society at home and abroad influence the attitudes of children so powerfully from earliest childhood, that I'm not sure how

much of the difference is related to suggestion and early training, and how much to inherent differences in the boys and girls themselves.

I can mention some distinctions that I have noted. But as to the reasons for such variation, there is still considerable doubt in my own mind.

Fath. Are the boys more interested in scientific subjects?

Dir. Yes, they are. But how far that is still the effect of the traditional attitude that machinery and the like belong to a boy's world and not to a girl's, I don't know. I feel it is too early to decide in terms of the new school movement.

Fath. And what other differences do you find?

Dir. Why, at the beginning of the adolescent period the interest of boys in artistic expression, painting, modeling, music, and dancing tends to decrease suddenly. It is largely a result of that preponderant opinion which regards such artistic pursuits as unmanly. And although the school makes an effort to overcome it, the tide is too strong. Most adolescent boys have not the strength to endure being called sissies by their companions when they manifest interest in the arts. It's a pity that our world is in such a state. For it curbs the natural artistic ability of many boys during adolescence. Some will, of course, when they are older, return to their first youthful enthusiasm; but others will in consequence be turned aside from the arts for life.

Fath. Perhaps later on, when some of them become successful men of affairs, they will begin to satisfy their artistic craving by becoming collectors, or by helping to support the arts in some other way.

Dir. Perhaps. But that isn't the same thing, is it?

Fath. No. . . .

Dir. Sometimes we have the reverse of this problem to

deal with. Now and then we get a child extraordinarily gifted in one of the arts, and his parents want to overdevelop this talent. At present we have a boy who may well become a professional musician, either composer or virtuoso, or both. We know that our job is to give him an education to balance his exuberant temperament and prevent any lopsided and unbalanced development. Had we not stepped in and advised his parents, they would by now have sacrificed his education in order to make him into a musical prodigy. You see, with the amount of time that he must spend on his music—violin, piano, and composition—a formal school would have told the parents, "Either your boy gives up some of his music study, or this school does not want him." To us his problem could not be solved in that way. We felt that too many musicians are one-sided in their development. We undertook to expand this boy's other capacities, such as his unusual ability in science and mathematics, while encouraging him to continue his work in music. We have now persuaded the parents to put no pressure on the boy, but to leave him alone until he decides whether music or science, his other great enthusiasm, is to mold his career.

Fath. I'm glad you told me that. I thought you probably overemphasized the arts at the expense of all the more practical subjects.

Dir. I don't think you'll find that our viewpoint. It's true that we put more emphasis on the arts than the formal schools. We do so because we think that they have been neglected and that some form of creative expression is natural to everybody.

Fath. Oh, I see! You don't mean that if they do study painting or music, they should necessarily turn into artists later on.

Dir. No. Spare us any more second- or third-rate artists.

The world is too full of them already. One may desire to express oneself in a definite form for one's own sake—not for the general public.

Fath. That sounds all right—quite sensible. That clears up one point about the school for me. I was afraid you emphasized the arts and sacrificed other studies.

Dir. And what's your next doubt about the school?

Fath. I know that I was brought up too severely at home. The ideals were superhuman. The suppression of my normal emotional life was puritanic. So I find myself reacting at one time *against* my rigid up-bringing, and at another falling unconsciously into the same old mold. I have, therefore, an unconquerable impulse to tell my children to make the most of the joys of the passing moment, lest they miss as much of life as I did. But in getting more out of life one should do nothing, I believe, to make those near to one suffer.

Dir. But that places you in a dilemma. Such sweeping generalizations, either when you say "Do nothing that will make another suffer," or "Do what you must to live fully yourself," will at times lead to inevitable contradictions.

Fath. Yes, that's the trouble. I don't know how to deal with it.

Dir. How can those statements be of use, without a classification as to the values of the life that lies concealed? Let's take as an example a problem that frequently arises nowadays in the modern middle-class home. When a girl grows up, she may wish to follow some serious calling of her own. Say, for instance, she wants to be a social worker. Her mother and father are in comfortable circumstances and are opposed to it. They block her efforts in every possible way. The financial argument is used against the girl. She is an only daughter. Her mother needs her at

home. The daughter does not have to earn money. Her parents have more than enough. The father, afraid that her economic independence may disturb his unquestioned authority, pleads with his daughter to submit to her mother's entreaties.

Fath. Yes, I know a number of such situations among my friends.

Dir. What happens if you place a son of the same family in a similar situation? Only the girl should consider her parents at the cost of herself. But at the beginning of her own maturity has she no right to determine the direction of her life, quite apart from mother or father? Every one would acquiesce were this the case of her brother. And to me it seems equally fair that the girl make her own decision, apart from the self-interest of the parents.

Fath. I think that nowadays it has come to that. It's a case of learning to accept the inevitable with as good a grace as possible.

Dir. No one would deny that such an action will be distressing and decidedly painful to many a parent.

Fath. Yes.

Dir. Well, I don't believe, then, that you can talk about doing nothing in one's life that will cause pain to others. For it seems to me that suffering is of the nature of existence. And a move in life that is important and right for one individual may cause pain and disturbance to others. But that cannot be made the test of the validity of an action. One naturally does not wish to hurt anybody unnecessarily. But there are times when each of us must be so clear as to our purpose that we can dare to be ruthless for the sake of a wider life.

Fath. Maybe so. Perhaps my difficulty is that I have never felt sure that anything I wanted to do mattered enough for me to act in that way.

Dir. You may then see why, to us, the great problem in a modern school is to help children to become so clear within themselves that they find values by which they can orient their entire lives.

Fath. Only children? How about the parents? (*Smiling.*)

Dir. You said that half jokingly. But suppose I answer you seriously and say that that also concerns us deeply.

Fath. I'm beginning to believe it would be so.

Dir. You see, the anxiety of parents as to their children is sometimes misplaced. When they are most anxious to help they often obstruct, because they have not resolved their own lives. You'd be surprised how many, many mothers and fathers, even in this type of school, are eager to press their children into paths that would have satisfied their own youthful ambitions. . . . Often they ignore the basic needs of their children in order to satisfy their own stifled ambition.

Fath. I suppose you often have fathers who are anxious for sons to follow in their footsteps?

Dir. Oh, yes. Are you perhaps one of those overzealous parents?

Fath. Maybe, without meaning to be so. But I don't want my boy to go into the law, if he finds that he prefers another career—say in some field of science.

Dir. I'm sure you'll give him time to make up his own mind in spite of your own predilection.

Fath. Oh, yes, I'll play fair. You can count on that. And some time or other I'd like to get your own analysis of the boy's problem. My wife has, of course, often given me reports of your comments to her.

Dir. But let's save that for another day.

Fath. Yes. Now, I want to get back to more questions about this new education. I'm puzzled about the attitude

of all these modern schools toward discipline. Where exactly do they stand?

Dir. You don't realize what a question you are posing. For the new schools don't agree among themselves as to the line of demarcation between liberty and license. And even within the walls of a single modern school you may find great divergence of opinion.

Fath. Is that so? I thought I was asking you a fairly simple question, which you could answer so as to set me straight, in no time.

Dir. I wish I could. I'll try to give you my point of view. But before I do, I'd like to explain why the problem of discipline seems so much more complex to modern educators than it did to our predecessors.

Fath. Fine! That's just what I want to understand.

Dir. You see, the old idea of education, the only kind most of our generation ever knew, was based on what was known as faculty psychology. It was believed that by training the individual powers such as memory, imagination, reasoning, etc., on special drills, each of these particular faculties would be thereby permanently strengthened and improved.

Fath. But that viewpoint has not yet been set aside in the majority of schools? Has it?

Dir. No. You're right. It's implicit in most of the formal teaching that still goes on throughout this country. But this is due mainly to the mechanicality of habits and the dullness of human inertia. Even conservative educators have come to agree that the old methods of mind-training by faculty discipline fail. Due to recent biological and psychological experiments, they know as well as we do that mind and body and emotions don't get harnessed up and trained for later life by work that is dissociated from real human problems. The struggle, therefore,

between *more* and *less* conservative educators, is no longer over the retention of the old faculty psychology. Practically, it is still in control of the school system, though in theory it has long since been scrapped.

Fath. I'm not clear about that point.

Dir. Well, it's no longer possible for any one in education to defend the old-time faculty psychology. Recent experiments as to the physiological and psychological response of human organisms have forced it out of the picture. We know now that bodies and minds function more completely in a state of pleasure than in one of pain. That knocks the bottom out of this long-accepted theory that the best training for human beings can be derived from work that is both painful and disagreeable to do. Satisfaction in activity is now known to be a physiological necessity for growth. That justifies interest as the motive in education. Even conservative educators know this now. But they try to compromise. Without giving up their old respect for firm discipline through formal studies, they try, nevertheless, to modify these school courses, so as to stimulate the interest of their pupils. They hold to old methods, but play up to the new appeal. Their position has never seemed to me fundamental or wholly sincere. The average teacher still continues to be trained by the average normal school in methods that were current fifty years ago. You can see the result in the majority of our public schools at the present time. They still do carry on classes as though formal discipline were the aim of all schooling.

Fath. But do you discard completely the possibility of disciplining the mind, training it as an instrument of thought?

Dir. Oh, now we'll have to take a look at what mind is before we start to train it. But instead of answering you in my own words, I want to reinforce my position by reading

you an apt reply to your question from Professor Whitehead's essay, *The Organization of Thought:*

"But what is the point of teaching a child to solve a quadratic equation? There is a traditional answer to this question. It runs thus: the mind is an instrument, you first sharpen it and then use it; the acquisition of the power of solving a quadratic equation is part of the process of sharpening the mind. Now there is just enough truth in this answer to have made it live through the ages. But for all its half truth, it embodies a radical error which bids fair to stifle the genius of the modern world. I do not know who was first responsible for this analogy of the mind to a dead instrument. . . . But whatever its weight of authority, whatever the high approval it can quote, I have no hesitation in denouncing it as one of the most fatal, erroneous, and dangerous conceptions ever introduced into the theory of education. The mind is never passive; it is a perpetual activity, delicate, receptive, responsive to stimulus. You cannot postpone its life until you have sharpened it. Whatever interest attaches to your subject matter must be evolved here and now; whatever powers you are strengthening in the pupil must be exercised here and now; whatever possibilities of mental life your teaching should impart, must be exhibited here and now." [1]

That's the most compact and comprehensive summary I've come across as to why the old way of training the mind or any of its faculties apart from problems of genuine interest is a complete failure.

Fath. There's no comeback, if it's stated that way. But isn't there the risk of falling into habits that neglect methodical or systematic training for practical use in later life?

Dir. That's a danger, and an all too common tendency

[1] A. N. Whitehead, *The Organization of Thought*, p. 12.

in the new schools that have swung away from formal discipline. That is what I had in mind before in speaking of the complexity of dealing with the problems of discipline. There is no longer the simple rule of thumb as to how far to carry a class in an arithmetic textbook or a grade reader. We are now trying to reduce the use of such texts in all school subjects in order to lead children on to direct experience and first-hand knowledge. The question of discipline is nowadays inseparable from the way in which a subject is taught. Right teaching in education is allied to true discipline.

Fath. It puts a greater responsibility on the teacher. Doesn't it?

Dir. Yes, but it also makes teaching come alive as an art. For the modern school opens up a new world, one that begins to reconsider basic values before it devises a new technique. Did you know that Tolstoy started his own experimental school that way seventy-five years ago?

Fath. What! Did Tolstoy run a school?

Dir. Yes. At the time when the serfs in Russia were freed, he opened a school on his own estate. He was still a very young man.

Fath. Was it experimental in the sense that our new schools are nowadays?

Dir. So much so that we haven't caught up with some of his ideas yet. He raised the question of "What must I teach?" and "How must I teach it?" and found little response in the whole world of European education at the time, because, he says, "This question does not even exist in connection with any science of Education as such; as every educationist of every given school firmly believed that the methods he used were the best, because they were founded on absolute truth, and that it would be useless for

him to look at them with a critical eye." [1] Can you believe this was said by Tolstoy two generations ago?

"School, so it would appear to us, ought to be a means of education, at the same time an experiment on the young generation, constantly giving new results. Only when experiment is at the foundation of school work and every school is, so to speak, an educational laboratory, will the school keep pace with the universal progress, and experiment be able to lay firm foundations for the science of education.

"The historical arguments are as feeble as the philosophical. The progress of life, of technical knowledge, of science, proceeds faster than the progress of the school, and the school therefore remains more and more behind the social life, and becomes ever worse and worse." [2]

Fath. That sounds sane enough. Not at all like the words of Tolstoy, the religious fanatic of later years.

Dir. It was during his thirties that he gave himself enthusiastically to the problems of education.

Fath. He's not afraid to speak of experimenting on the younger generation, is he?

Dir. No, but he means it in the true sense, that of the experimental scientist who realizes that the world does not stand still. And to remain static is to be left behind.

Fath. That's true in business and affairs of the world. But I had never heard of such an attitude in relation to education.

Dir. Here it's even more crucial. For irreparable damage is done to human life in its first period of growth, if it is not carefully nurtured according to its special needs. If the spontaneous eagerness and enthusiasm of childhood

[1] Paul Birukoff, *Leo Tolstoy, His Life and Work*, p. 321.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 327.

is blunted by the monotonous routine of a formal school, great potentialities may be forever destroyed.

Fath. Parents are afraid of the word "experimental," applied to education. I know *I* was. I thought it meant trying out new ideas on children, the way scientists try out serums on guinea pigs. I dreaded lest modern educators subject promising children, especially my own, to such risky experiments.

Dir. Yes, I know. I've often met that objection. It's due to a complete misunderstanding of what is meant by the application of "experimental" to a school. It is so often used in contrast to the term "regular." And the argument runs that since the technique and the material of orthodox education have served their purpose in the past to the satisfaction of the many, they must, therefore, in the same fashion, be effective under all circumstances in the future. Well, modern science has now discovered a good deal more about the physiology and psychology of human beings, and the old methods of education were not based on this wider knowledge. As you suggested, a man of affairs knows that if new and more fundamental methods of doing business are discovered, he must find out about them as quickly as possible. A man stirred by competition in the world of business often overcomes his usual inertia and improves his methods, but rarely does he meet such a challenge in his own life by doing something active about the education of his children.

Fath. Isn't that assertion somewhat sweeping?

Dir. It's meant to be. Parents, particularly fathers, don't give much attention to revaluing and reconsidering life for the children they have brought into the world.

Wide-awake men and women know that most of the traditions and the faiths of the last generation have crumbled. And yet they seem to act as though such a revolution

in the conception of the universe can occur without ultimately affecting the minutest elements of our daily lives.

You see, the word "experimental" is misleading; if it could only be replaced by "scientific" in describing the new schools, it would come nearer to the truth. For the attitude of the best modern school teachers is just that of the laboratory student, who, in this case, strips himself of all possible preconception and prejudice, in order to study his subject, the child, in its normal environment, the school. The teachers of an experimental school do not turn into ruthless vivisectionists who ultimately further human life by destroying its present forms. For a modern educator must combine the objective scientific training of an observer with the positive creative quality of an artist. He must not dissect life to destroy it. Rather must he comprehend in order to recreate. So that from my point of view, it is the orthodox rather than the experimental school which is destructive to the real life of its children. Theirs is, to me, the dangerous experiment. They force the infinite variability of human beings into the single mold of an inflexible school environment. I know of no greater risk to the fulfillment of true personality than just such external conformity as the ordinary school requires.

Fath. You've given me a new slant on things. I now for the first time see that I had assumed as a matter of course that whatever had persisted by dominating the majority, whether in education or the rest of life, must contain proven values. Never before did I understand how one's attitude toward education defined one's own philosophy in terms that link our future with the past.

Twelfth Dialogue

The New-School Physician and An Old-Fashioned Children's Specialist

New-School Physician. Good morning, Doctor, I'm so glad you've arranged to come. It means a lot for a busy man like you to give up this time.

Old-Fashioned Children's Specialist. Yes, my dear fellow, it does. But when you urged me so particularly to meet you here today at this school, I decided to do so. I strained a point to make it.

New S. P. Thanks.

Old C. S. Well, you've never been a waster of either time or words. Ever since you worked under me in the Children's Hospital, I've expected great things of you. So, when you asked me to meet you here today, I came, even postponing an important appointment to do so.

New S. P. I only hope that it won't prove to have been merely a sacrifice on your part.

Old C. S. Why did you want me to meet you here, of all places? It's one of these dreadful new schools, isn't it? But I suppose you have some special, some unusual case—a child that happens to attend this school, about whom you wished to consult me, on the spot?

New S. P. No. Nothing of that kind, Doctor.

Old C. S. What is it then?

New S. P. Well, you see, I'm the school physician here.

Old C. S. Then there is some general medical problem of school hygiene, or something of that kind to be gone over?

New S. P. No. Not even that. I don't want to ask you anything. I simply want you to see something that you've never seen before.

Old C. S. But you say, it's not a case! What then?

New S. P. A school.

Old C. S. You want me to spend my precious time poking about in one of these new-fangled schools! It's bad enough if you will act as their doctor. But that needn't draw me into it also.

New S. P. Say, have you ever been inside of one of these new schools?

Old C. S. No. And why should I begin now, at my time of life?

New S. P. I'll tell you why. You are constantly writing books for parents on the care and upbringing of children.

Old C. S. And what if I am? I don't see the connection.

New S. P. Well, sir, you will, if you'll let me show you around this school and tell you a bit of my own experience as its physician.

Old C. S. So you've been dabbling around with this school some time? Eh?

New S. P. It's all of five years. And it's taught me more about children than all my other training put together.

Old C. S. Not so flattering to me, if I took that too literally. But of course, it's the practical everyday experience that counts. I always told you that.

New S. P. No. I don't mean that. Not what you infer at all. I make a distinction between the way I've learned to work with children in this school and all the rest of my experience, not excluding my private practice. I know that I had the best training in the world under you. There's

no better pediatrist in America. I know that. When it comes to problems of diet and hygiene, you have them all eating out of your hand.

Old C. S. Oh, don't overestimate me.

New S. P. I don't. I know your true value. That's just why I asked you to come here. I wanted you to have a look on another angle of the child problem. Just as there have had to be a growing number of specialists in other ever-widening fields of medicine, so I believe it must be in the sphere of pediatry. The school physician, it seems to me, is going to play a very important part in the community of the future. And in a real school, he can't be just any young doctor who hasn't as yet built up a large practice of his own, nor can he be some inexperienced assistant, acting under the direction of a prominent pediatrist.

Old C. S. What are you driving at? I certainly don't see the job of school physician as an important field for an able doctor.

New S. P. Of course you couldn't, if you only take into consideration the old-fashioned type of school as a field for action.

Old C. S. But where does the difference come in? New or old type of school, wouldn't the job merely consist of regulating school hygiene and giving physical examinations to each child?

New S. P. No. Because here, in this school, due importance is given to psychological factors that the orthodox school and the orthodox physician have ignored altogether.

Old C. S. Don't tell me, my dear man, that you have fallen for anything psychological like those damnable Freudian doctrines. I never believed that any assistant of mine would turn against his sound training.

New S. P. Hold on a bit, Doctor. Don't jump to such

violent conclusions. Before I ever heard of psychoanalysis I became convinced that we were underestimating the psychological, the emotional factors in the lives of children. It's just that failure among physicians that has given rise to the disproportionate influence of the modern psychologist with his exaggerated emphasis on intelligence tests. We doctors have been so obsessed with the physiological that for years we've ignored the psychological aspect of childhood. And our future efforts to counterbalance this lack will be greatly enhanced, I believe, by co-operating with the new schools.

Old C. S. What's this! From your tone of voice, your whole attitude, one would think that you had gone to these new schools to learn from them, instead of making them come to seek advice from you.

New S. P. In a way, that's so. But the exchange has really been fifty-fifty. The fact is that all of us are learning every day from the children themselves. The teachers, the school director, the school psychologist, and I myself —we're all of us in that position and perfectly aware of it. We realize how little we know now, after all our years of work and study in training schools. And we're determined to do something about it before it's too late.

Old C. S. And what are you going to do?

New S. P. Again, I tell you, the answer lies in this new type of school.

Old C. S. Can't you be more explicit, more concrete in your explanations?

New S P. Surely. If that's what you want.

Old C. S. Children shouldn't go to school too soon. I don't believe in these nursery schools at all. Children should play while they play, until they grow into strong and healthy animals. Then set them to real work at school and teach them to know what real discipline is, without

any monkey-business. I doubt whether there is anything in this eternally protracted childhood of our American education. Don't send children to school too young. But when they go, let it be to a "work-school" and not to a "play-school," I say.

New S. P. Look here. You just admitted a few minutes ago that you haven't visited any of these nursery and play schools?

Old C. S. Yes. But the principles are all wrong, I tell you. I've talked to some of these new school mothers and teachers, and that's enough for me.

New S. P. Scarcely. I've worked hand in hand with the school psychologist and the teachers here for a number of years. And I assure you, I've got more out of this experience than out of all my pediatric training and hospital service. There it was always attempts to patch up bodily defects after the damage was done. Here in these experimental schools one gets a chance not only to head off physical disabilities at their inception, but one is able to deal with psychological maladjustments long before they manifest in injurious daily habits or in the physical irregularities of illness.

Old C. S. Oh, come now! Don't tell me that you, one of our most promising children's specialists of the younger generation, have fallen for all this new psychological bunk! You don't really believe there is anything in psychoanalysis.

New S. P. Doctor, I do. I've made special case studies of so-called normal children, in my private practice and in the school work here, in co-operation with the school psychologist and the teachers. I've not had time as yet to get the material all in shape for publication. But I'd like you to see some of it soon, if you're interested.

Old C. S. Oh, I'll look at it sometime. But that isn't

what you asked me to come to this school for today? Is it?

New S. P. No. I was sure you had never seen one of these new schools in action, and I wanted you to visit this one with me, before you publish another of your volumes of advice to young mothers.

Old C. S. So, young man. You don't think I know my business.

New S. P. It's not that, at all. There's no one in the country to compare with you as an authority on the feeding of children. And I know you're ahead of every one in studying the modifications of diet needed by the different glandular types in childhood.

Really, Doctor, it's only because I have such wholehearted admiration for your work that I asked you to come and see what we're up to here. And we've tried to do a lot in this school on the problem of diet. Not only do we see to it that children get the right kind of diet for their special type; but we also take care that regular eating habits are built up in the daily lunch periods at the school.

Old C. S. That's most important. But why should that be done by the school? It's the place of mothers and nurses to develop proper eating habits in children, years before they come to school.

New S. P. Oh, is it? Well, nursery schools or no nursery schools, I find that many of my young patients have faulty eating habits that home environments have entirely failed to correct.

Old C. S. Then one must teach mothers and nurses to do their jobs more efficiently.

New S. P. But wrong eating habits, while often due to bad physical training, may on the other hand be related to all sorts of emotional disturbances.

Old C. S. Oh, now you're getting back, I'm sure, to all this new psychological lingo that I despise.

New S. P. I'm merely talking of the psychological aspects of all habit formation in children. I was perfectly aware that it took people of greater psychological insight and intuition than the average nurse or mother to create a harmonious balance in the daily life of the modern city child.

Old C. S. Of course, the strain of city life and the limits of outdoor play space have made the rearing of children infinitely more difficult than it was thirty years ago.

New S. P. Yes. And that is just the importance of these nursery schools. With their all-day schemes and sunny roof play space, they help to solve these problems.

Old C. S. Such institutions are excusable for the professional woman, who *has* to park her child and can't afford a good nurse.

New S. P. That's not what I mean at all. These play schools for young children are an infinitely saner and healthier way of bringing up all kinds of children.

Old C. S. So you're going to be arguing next for the complete break-up of family life. A realization of Plato's dream, I suppose!

New S. P. He was no fool. He knew what you and I know only too well, how much permanent damage is done to human beings in their childhood by the most devoted of parents. But what we're discussing has really no relation to breaking up the family as a unit. In middle-class families, it means merely replacing the ministrations of nurses and governesses, for certain hours of each day, by the guardianship of specially trained nursery teachers. And to my mind, one of the great advantages of the nursery school is that it places a small child in a group of his peers. A two-year-old tot has others of the same age to play with. It's the one way, I know, to avoid the disas-

trous consequences of the only-child adjustment in modern families.

Old C. S. That is a point, one of the few I see in its favor. But on the other hand, a small child should not be under the constant strain of such group-life. All day with other children—it's too much. Babies should have quiet, not overstimulation and overactivity. I still believe they'd be better off in the park with a nice motherly nurse.

New S. P. Do you ever wander through the park and linger near the pigeons, where the nurses and baby carriages are thickest?

Old C. S. Well, I can't say I have much time for that sort of thing.

New S. P. If you did, you'd hear and see such a repression of normal childhood striving by impatient nurses that you'd wonder why we adults don't turn out even worse than we are. And there's another point I want to take up with you. You spoke of "motherly nurses," implying, I suppose, that a maternal quality was enough. Now you and I know that mothers themselves don't have any true inborn maternal instinct on which to bring up a child. That's just what keeps us doctors so busy educating the mothers as well as caring for the children. Why, then, should you talk as though nurses would be any better? They are often worse.

Old C. S. But, you see, even granting the failure of the maternal instinct in the human race, I'd rather turn my efforts to training mothers and nurses to do their job more competently than dump the responsibility on the school. That's the only reason I spend my spare time writing my untechnical handbooks on the care of children.

New S. P. I'm all for this popular training along such lines as you and other pediatrists are making available.

It's absolutely necessary. Only, from my point of view it's not enough. We need these modern schools, where psychological adjustment is linked up with the routine of physical habits. And it's only by having nurses and mothers and doctors also co-operating with these new schools that we can finally build up a fresh body of knowledge as to the physiological as well as the psychological foundations of childhood.

Old C. S. I don't mean to seem altogether closed to your point of view. It's true I'm skeptical. But just give me some concrete example of some practical methods of affecting childhood habits in such a nursery school. Something that could not have been done better at home.

New S. P. I might as well cite a couple of cases that are related to your special interest in the feeding of children. We find that the daily hot lunch which the youngsters eat here with their teacher gives this school a rare opportunity to study food idiosyncrasies and habits. It's distressing to discover how many young children won't eat certain wholesome vegetables. In nearly every case we have traced it either to an emphatically expressed dislike of such food on the part of one of the parents, or to the fact that the child was not used to being fed certain vegetables at an early enough age.

Old C. S. Has this school been successful in changing such finicky tastes?

New S. P. Nearly always. It has often taken time and patience. At school a child shares his lunch with his classmates and his teacher. And the winning of this group's good opinion is a spur to the child's effort to overcome his prejudice about any particular food. No physical pressure is, of course, ever brought to bear on food habits. We have, in fact, discovered that many of the resistances to certain foods in children are directly connected with a

struggle of wills between parent and child. Of course, I don't say that intestinal disturbances haven't sometimes set up a distaste in children for certain foods. But what I see is that most of these temporary disturbances might easily slip into the forgotten past, if handled intelligently at the psychological moment.

We have one such child here now. I recall that during her first weeks at school she was pale and anaemic-looking. The worried mother told us that she was wasting away. She literally did not swallow 25 per cent. of her food. She chewed it up and rolled it all into masticated balls, which she tucked up between her gum and her cheek. It was not only weeks, but months, I assure you, before we had that child eating and swallowing her food in a normal way.

Old C. S. You don't say! That sounds like an interesting case.

New S. P. It was. The child was getting such satisfaction from the power she exercised over her distracted mother by starving herself that it took a long time to convince her that no one in school was going to urge her to eat. It was decided that when she resisted food at mealtime in school, she was to be treated as though she were more childish than the rest of her group. She was always placed next to the teacher, who fed her only with small mouthfuls of food. Never was she permitted a fresh morsel until the previous one was swallowed. No one urged her to eat more than she chose, or persuaded her to keep pace with the other children. If she had not finished when the rest of her class left the table, the teacher or her assistant remained with her until she was finished. But it soon became irksome to this child to find that what had been a source of power and control at home was looked down upon as childish weakness in the school. It made her

lose caste with her playmates and with her teachers. So gradually she relinquished this destructive food habit and found herself more powerful and better liked in the school group without it.

Old C. S. And you say that there are many other cases you've been able to treat more satisfactorily right in this school environment? More successfully here than at home?

New S. P. Yes, indeed. Take this child I've just referred to. No one could have persuaded the mother to change her tactics in handling that child's eating habits at home. She was too worried and had already set up all the girl's resistances to her persuasion.

Old C. S. Yes. You've made a good case for yourself out of that.

New S. P. But I selected this problem pertaining to food habits merely to illustrate my argument. Actually, these new schools get at the root of many destructive physical habits, conditions as various as tantrums, anxiety, jealousy, daydreaming and overcombativeness; all these come under the surveillance of such a school.

Old C. S. I don't see how.

New S. P. You couldn't possibly, unless you made allowance for other factors than the physical in the case of children.

Old C. S. And the only completely satisfactory person for that job would be, then, this ideal school physician of yours.

New S. P. Yes. Let's talk about him. You want, I know, to jolly me out of what seems to you a somewhat absurd and youthful notion. It's not just my idea, I assure you. There are as yet few leaders of the medical profession who realize just what I'm working for. But there is apparently one prominent psychiatrist of the older genera-

tion who does. I'm referring to Adolf Meyer, who has described the rôle of the school physician of the future in terms that are verified by my own experience.

Old C. S. How so?

New S. P. I'm going to read you just what Meyer said on the subject in a talk to parents and teachers:

"Let me state as the first requirement, that the school physician should have a clear conception of the school child's nature as an organism to be studied in its parts and also as a psycho-biological whole, a personality and individual—a conception which implies training in psychobiology for at least a certain number of school physicians. The school physician who has the analytic-constructive biological conception approaches the pupil with due attention to disorders of eye and ear, of the breathing and the possible adenoids, and the state of nutrition, but he also knows that the pupil brings to the school an endowment not merely of special organs but also of habits of total function; good or bad food habits, expressing themselves in appetites and more or less orderly habits of feeding and of digestion; a more or less adequate equipment of habits of sleep and waking and resting and activity; the kind of life characteristic of the infant or child or adolescent, different from that of the adult or old person; he recognizes individual differences in the scope of endowment and resources; endurance and concentration and interest; or weakness, distractibility and indifference; a varying ability to control with foresight the momentary notions, temptations and desires; a capacity of contentment and satisfaction, or of unrest, habits of self-dependence or of dependence upon others and craving for attention; habits for team work or a lack of social instincts; an ability to mix, to respond to others, and to make them respond—an ability to understand and to be

understood and to enjoy and be enjoyed. Within this large sphere of resources and activities and qualifications we may further single out features such as varying preparedness to meet the unusual or perhaps the undesirable, such as sickness, and varying amenability to discipline and to guidance, and capacities to assume responsibilities and duties." [1]

Old C. S. Well, now, it sounds as though there were to be nothing in the whole field of medicine, education, and psychology for which the school physician were not to be made responsible in the near future!

New S. P. You begin to see, then, that there *is* a field for a wholly new kind of doctor in children's work.

Old C. S. But why should a children's specialist take over the work of nerve specialist and educator combined?

New S. P. You haven't got that quite straight. There is going to be a need of a new type of training altogether in the medical profession. I've just quoted to you the opinion of one of our leading psychiatrists on the subject. He emphasizes the importance of preventing the development of adult neurotics by a more intelligent attention to childhood adjustments in the schools. And who is to do it? Not the teacher alone, not the psychologist alone, nor the physician single-handed. He must have the co-operation of both these trained specialists. Together with the school physician they can create a fundamental and healthy education for the future.

Old C. S. In what way do you see this new type of school physician functioning so harmoniously in these new schools? Just why do they offer him a better opportunity than private practice for this work?

New S. P. Because these schools have come to realize

[1] Jennings, Watson, Meyer and Thomas, *Suggestions of Modern Science Concerning Education*, pp. 119-121.

the mistakes and weakness of the orthodox education. They reject the methods of mental training and mental discipline at the expense of physical and emotional development. They regard mind and body as equally important aspects of their pupils.

This leads to a complete reorganization of the school program. The old distinctions between work and play in very young groups is wiped out. All their activities are given importance. The old ideal of rigid physical discipline, silence, and immobility in the classroom has been done away with. With the realization of the necessity of physical activity and emotional satisfaction as the basis of school as well as home life, we have come to a new phase of education. The problem is no longer how much cut-and-dried information can be crammed into a class of children, but how many well-rounded individuals, genuine personalities, can be brought to fulfillment in such a school.

Old C. S. I can't make you out. The more you say, the less I understand. School was for me, and for my children as well, the place one went in order to learn to study and prepare oneself for one's real work in adult life.

New S. P. Oh, yes. But nowadays, educators are realizing that school life should be lived as a value in itself, not merely as a discipline and means to some future end. And that's just where our new type of school physician comes in, to help children to make such physiological and psychological adjustments as can prevent both strain and disease.

Old C. S. Oh, I think you claim and hope too much for your school physician.

New S. P. I don't. Again I'll quote from Dr. Meyer. He, too, regards disease as a symptom of unbalance that the school doctor can help to prevent:

"The point that concerns us all is that back of everything lie the yearnings, the 'penchant,' the leanings of the individual's make-up and the equation of balancing factors of the individual and the social group—the capacity to balance the resources wherever there is a choice or a need of proper adaptation and substitutions.

"*Disease* shows us along what lines human beings are apt to break down and what man is not made for. It points inexorably to any existing discrepancies of balance, and errors in the working out of one's economic safety and efficiency. Some diseases are a community disgrace, others a social disgrace, still others must be charged to the stock (poorly guided habits of mating) and to the life of the family, and still others to the individual. Most diseases are chargeable to the unwillingness or inability to face realities of make-up and situation and to shape one's life in keeping with them. And the same holds for the major and the minor difficulties one meets in the schoolroom and playroom; the shyness, the fears, misbehavior, temporary inefficiency, etc.

"In brief, you see the modern school physician is in co-operation with the modern school to be responsible for all sides of the life of the child. He will not merely cut out tonsils and doctor measles and colds. He will work with the school to discover the child's abilities and disabilities and find ways to help him function joyfully and completely in life, in relation to his family, his school and his playmates." [1]

Old C. S. Again, I repeat, that's a large order. No one has time to be expert enough to deal with all those problems.

New S. P. Oh, I don't agree with you there. So much

[1] Jennings, Watson, Meyer and Thomas, *Suggestions of Modern Science Concerning Education,* pp. 132-133.

of the work can be done in the early years, by dealing promptly with the first symptoms of maladjustment. Then the more complex difficulties of later adolescence can often be avoided.

Old C. S. And you have plenty of proof in your own experience here that you can adjust difficult, even problem children, to a more positive orientation in this type of school?

New S. P. Would I be talking to you in this way, do you think, if I didn't have the conviction of experience behind me?

Old C. S. Tell me, what do you and your associates here do with the problem of sex, if it comes up in this type of school?

New S. P. If it comes up! Of course it does. You remember, of course, the time when the public schools gave courses in physiology in which all diagrams of sex organs were omitted. Then the pendulum swung the opposite way and obvious courses on sex hygiene were scattered broadcast throughout the country. Neither method reaches the real problem—the need of all children to understand themselves; and this includes their physical and spiritual functions in relation to the entire universe.

Old C. S. You talk in such sweeping terms. I ask you how you deal with sex education here, and you talk about children orienting themselves to the universe.

New S. P. Yes. And it's no accident that I answered you in just that way. Our work here in this experimental school, as well as in my own private practice, has led to the collection of some very interesting data. I have records of twenty-five children made through the period from three to six years. They include all the significant questions these children asked and all the answers teachers or parents gave in co-operation with the school's plan.

Old C. S. And were these questions and answers relevant to my inquiry?

New S. P. Every one of those children before they were six had asked all those leading questions that philosophers pose, but never solve. What is life? What is death? Where do we come from? Where do we go? When the body dies, are we born again? Who made the world? Who made the first man? What is the sun? the stars? the moon? What makes us move, speak, think, feel? Why am I a boy? What is a girl? What moves the sea? What is heat? What is electricity? What is right? What is wrong? What is time? Those are some of the riddles to which these children, as well as philosophers, seek an answer.

Old C. S. You don't mean to say that you have found all these profound questions, and particularly questions as to sex, coming from little children between the ages of three and six?

New S. P. Yes. "Out of the mouths of babes." It's true, I assure you, that whenever a child is not unnaturally suppressed or lied to by a fond parent or nurse who is afraid or unable to give him the truth, he seeks it in simple and natural questions.

Old C. S. But can and should sex be dealt with when children are so young, so immature?

New S. P. Every real question that a child asks deserves a real answer. But it is not so simple to distinguish a real question in a very young child, particularly if he has not always been told the truth when he asks for enlightenment.

In spite of your violent prejudice against psychoanalysis, I am going to tell you that it was my contact with three well-known analytic case-studies of children by Freud, Jung, and Ferenczi over a dozen years ago that set me on the track of studying this problem of the early orientation

of children. My experience since then with hundreds of normal youngsters has corroborated what these analysts uncovered, in the unconscious psychic life of their "Little Hans," [1] "Little Anna," [2] and "Little Arpad." [3]

This is no time to go into the problem in detail. If you are interested, I will gladly show you my records some evening when you are at liberty.

Old C. S. Yes. I'd like to see them soon.

New S. P. There is only one point I want to make now.

Old C. S. Which is?

New S. P. That when we do deal with the questions children raise as to life, death, birth, sex, and the universe in general, we do not hand out the information to a group of children en masse. No. We do not give it out gratis to groups or individuals. We wait until a child asks about these matters of his own accord. If the moment is not then fitting to give him the information he desires, we see to it that he gets his answer individually at some later time.

The real difficulty in dealing with these serious questions does not lie in the children, but in the troubled and uncertain states of many of the adults who are asked to give straightforward answers. Not many are sure and clear enough in their own lives to meet it simply and naturally. We try to help and prepare parents to deal with these intimate questions with their own children in the right way whenever possible. For the school has no wish to intercept, but merely to encourage within the family such close interchange of thought and feeling as may lead to a further and deeper understanding between parent and child.

[1] S. Freud, *Collected Papers*, Vol. III, p. 149.
[2] C. G. Jung, *Analytical Psychology*, p. 132.
[3] S. Ferenczi, *Sex in Psychoanalysis*, p. 240.

Thirteenth Dialogue

A University Professor and the Director

Director. What made you look into the modern schools in this city so systematically? I know that your own field is English. Most of your colleagues at the university regard our schools as merely useful feeding-stations for their colleges.

Professor of English. Oh, come now. Some of the old fellows have gone stale, I admit, forever buried in their own special work. But I've friends quite as eager as myself for the reorganization of education from the ground up. After all, if there's any life left in us professors, we can't help being depressed at the condition of young people as they fall into our hands. Personally, I know that something drastic must be done, and done before the universities are consumed with dry rot.

But I must confess to you now that I'm not only interested in education as an educator. I'm right up against the problem as a parent. You see, I've got two boys. One is almost ready for college. He's been through the regular preparatory work at boarding school, and the results are disheartening. I don't want the younger one, he's nine, to come out like that if I can help it. And that's the reason I'm looking over all the new schools.

Dir. I, too, happen to be a parent as well as an educator. It makes the responsibility seem doubly great.

Doesn't it? You've just come from seeing a lot of new schools. I wonder whether you'd tell me your real impressions of what you've seen? It would interest me a great deal to hear them.

Prof. That's just what I'd like to talk over with you. It's the reason I asked for this appointment. I have a lot of questions to ask you, also.

Dir. I'll do my best to match your candor with my own.

Prof. I was surprised to find such divergence in method and purpose among the modern schools I visited. Two things, though, they did have in common.

Dir. What?

Prof. Well, I see that they all consider their schools as dynamic social organisms and are trying to build their work around genuine centers of interest; and secondly, that even the least traditional schools are constricted by the dead hand of college entrance examinations.

Dir. Yes, every year the strain becomes more acute. The colleges, now overcrowded, are each year raising their entrance requirements, thus making it constantly more difficult for the new schools to develop a varied and creative curriculum.

Prof. The time is coming, I hope, when a few of our liberal universities will recognize the necessity of accepting students from a certain number of authentic modern schools without the old type of examination. For I've certainly seen proofs of the most striking ability for independent and original research, as well as individual powers in the creative arts, in a number of these new schools. And I want to know why some way cannot be found to credit such trained ability. For I know now that some of these students are more genuinely equipped for college work than many who pass brilliant examinations

under our present system of entrance requirements. Such entrance tests are not given for the discovery of powers of original and independent study, and they require the sacrifice of too much time from more important school work. Our colleges are now nothing but treadmills for continuing the mechanical routine which they have already imposed on the entire school system of America.

Dir. You're the first of the university group I've heard make such a sweeping indictment of our college requirements.

Prof. I *know* what's wrong now. I have seen, for myself, high-school students in some of these modern schools doing more competent and independent research in such subjects as science, history, and literature than our own classes of college sophomores could possibly sustain. And as for my own students in freshman English, the less I say of their illiteracy and helplessness, the better.

I see now how deeply responsible the colleges really are for certain limitations within our secondary school programs. I tell you, I'm determined to make some other professors visit these new schools right away. I want the facts to strike home with them as they have with me. I'm even going to try to shake up our Board of Trustees. They have no sense of the incubus of college entrance demands on our schools. I believe there's a surprise in store for them if they visit some of these modern experiments.

Dir. Just what was it that surprised you during your tour of these new schools?

Prof. I hadn't hoped to find such a passionate enthusiasm for real work, nor such power of original expression and independent thought, nor, finally, such a satisfying synthesis of sustained effort and enthusiastic play. It's been a refreshing experience.

Dir. I'm glad that you discovered such positive merits.

We're so used to skeptical and negative criticism from the majority of your colleagues. The university people don't generally like to have their immemorial values questioned by what they can't help regarding as upstart schools. It's quite understandable.

Prof. Well, I don't feel that way. And I believe many of the young professors would feel as I do, if only they saw for themselves what was going on in these schools.

But to get back again to the contrast between the policy and methods of some of these schools. How do you account for the great variation that exists?

Dir. But why shouldn't they vary considerably? They have in common a certain protest against the barren formality of old methods, and a certain agreement, springing from their common ancestry in Rousseau as their original parent and Dewey as their immediate father; beyond which they seem to vary from an almost pedantic formalism to a well-nigh chaotic laissez-faire.

Prof. You mean that the learning by doing which they all emphasize springs from Rousseau, and the socialization of the school from Dewey.

Dir. Yes, but there's one other element in Rousseau that has had a serious influence on the left wing of the new school movement—the belief that we can right ourselves by simply removing certain limiting trammels of civilization.

Prof. You would agree with me, then, I should imagine, that the whole attempt to encourage mere spontaneity of expression, without defined standards or norms, is not sound, even in a new school?

Dir. Why, certainly! You can see that this school does not stand for any such laissez-faire type of undisciplined activity?

Prof. Yes. But I've come to realize, as I passed from

school to school, how difficult it really is to hold the balance between true standards of workmanship and personal expression by means of discipline that is positive but not inhibitory.

Dir. Especially since the best of the teachers in the new schools are still reacting against their own over-formal training. You raised a question just now as to the differences between the various new schools. But the public usually lumps all the modern schools together, as though there were no distinctions. Formal schools can at least be grouped together because they accept certain identical scholastic standards and similar educational procedure.

Prof. Yes, I've been amazed how little most intelligent people I know have ever investigated the experimental schools.

Dir. To most people a modern school is a place where the work is made more interesting to the children. But then the question always follows: Should work be pleasant? Should children enjoy going to school? Shouldn't unpleasant discipline be undergone as a preparation for life?

Prof. They don't understand that, from the very start, life in the living is at any moment all that counts, as means to both control and enjoyment. It's strange, isn't it, how little people are aware that so-called discipline in formal teaching is no real training or discipline at all? Most human beings are so far from having discovered a sure direction for themselves that they doubt the feasibility of encouraging self-discipline and self-direction in children.

Dir. You're right; most people are only doing what they have to do, by being forced or driven. Hence they say that no child can possibly be expected to sustain real work upon interest and activity as primary motives.

Prof. I went yesterday to visit a school run on the

Dalton Plan. I was anxious to see there the effect of abolishing the classroom system of teaching. And I was eager to see how this system of substituting laboratory or special subject studies for classroom work succeeded. The children, I understand, report or check on the work they complete individually from week to week or month to month. I saw how this method of allowing each to work by himself encouraged the development of potential capacities by not using the average capacity as the standard of group work.

Dir. Yes, up to a certain point it's effective. I think the Dalton Plan contains an important technique to break up the present absurd overemphasis on classroom organization and the teacher's customary dominance over her class.

Prof. I can sense a certain reservation in your voice as to how far this is satisfactory for an entire educative process. And I, too, have my doubts.

Dir. How? In what way?

Prof. Although I'm not for our present lifeless lecture system, I do believe that group contacts, directed intelligently and encouraged to active exchange, are one of the most fruitful methods of educational expansion and growth.

Dir. Yes, I'm with you there. We need a balance between individual work and group activity. When our school opened, some time before the Dalton Plan was popularized, it laid emphasis on laboratories, studios, or special rooms, not only for the sciences, but for arts, crafts, languages, and so forth. And the older the children, the more were they encouraged to work in special rooms on their own responsibility. It has always seemed to me that the problem of modern education has two facets, that of individual expansion and that of organic group growth.

Prof. You're right. Neither the social nor the indi-

vidual angle of school life can be dealt with satisfactorily by itself. The Dalton Plan seems to me to omit many of the problems of group adjustment.

Dir. The risk of the plan is that as a technique it can be used just as successfully with the most old-fashioned textbooks and superficial checks on the learning process. That's what made it so popular in many English schools. They could *seem* to come in with the vanguard of the new school movement. But actually they often retained an inadequate curriculum and out-of-date textbooks. It seems to be a technique of organization usable for various kinds of teaching.

Prof. Most people I've talked to since I visited the Lincoln School don't realize how it is limited by the purpose for which it was started—as you, of course, know, to revise material and teaching methods including suitable textbooks, for eventual application to the public-school system of America. It's an interesting and important aim in education. But it's not the one that is of primary interest to me personally. For by such conditions the freedom of its experiment is already narrowly defined and limited. And what really concerns me in education is to discover values and standards suitable for the general development of human beings under the best possible conditions; not the fitting of human beings into any of the standardized schemes of organization, whether our public schools or our colleges. As objectives both interfere, to my way of thinking, with a complete and fundamental revaluation of educational norms.

Here we are, both of us probably more interested in education as teachers and parents than in anything else in life. Where do we stand?

Dir. We're agreed that the old type of education has failed us. What, to begin with, do you believe education

really is, before we go on to talk of what it might become?

Prof. I'm aware of no better definition than Whitehead's—that education is the acquisition of the art of utilizing knowledge.

Dir. Good! He speaks of the "art" rather than the "science" of education. But I would add further, the utilization of knowledge for *understanding*.

Prof. Understanding in what sense?

Dir. Well, one may have collected all the actual facts, the concrete data that the world calls knowledge, but if there is not an intense internal synthesis between these mental concepts and their emotional realization, why, there has been no chemical change—no human transformation through a true act of knowing.

Prof. That's good. Whitehead is, in fact, seeking for the same thing. He's bully when he discusses the danger of what he calls "inert ideas" in education. You know his books, don't you?

Dir. Science and the Modern World—yes, indeed. After discovering him I felt a little less alone in my struggle against the orthodox scientific views of today.

Prof. But I'm referring to an essay of Whitehead's on "The Aims of Education" in his *Organization of Thought*. He defines "inert ideas" as those merely received in the mind without being realized or tested, or thrown into fresh combinations.

Dir. Now hold on a minute. We can't go any further on ideas, dead or alive, without calling a halt on our conception of the nature of mind.

Prof. No. I suppose we can't take that for granted. But I was simply racing ahead. I assumed our agreement upon mind as an active instrument and simply ignored Locke's interpretation.

Dir. But the world hasn't done so yet. You forget that

it's just Locke's view of our minds as blank waxen tablets that still supports our insane system of cramming information into school children.

Prof. With Rousseau we have a reversal of attitude. Realizing at least the distortions produced by our civilization, he sought to strip off false accretions and return to essential living.

Dir. It was Rousseau's romantic hope that maladjusted human functions could right themselves by a return to the simple life of nature. It is from him that the extremists of uncontrolled self-expression claim to draw their exaggerated philosophy—with unfortunate consequences to the reputation of the new school movement.

Prof. The real problem, then, is to define our attitude toward the relation of body and mind in education.

Dir. Perhaps we must go a step further and set the relation as threefold, of body, mind, and nature.

Prof. That would be more complete as a diagram of more than our education—I mean of our entire culture.

Dir. Of course. Consider how our art, religion, government, everything in Western civilization is indubitably colored by our affirmation of mind and negation of body.

Prof. Yes, to this day we continue to keep mind and body separate, with our overintellectual studies and our exaggerated and special use of sport. But that's what these modern schools are attempting to correct, isn't it?

Dir. As far as possible.

Prof. None of us can do more than look at a new problem through the lens of our past experience. My years of university training have unfortunately colored my outlook in a way that I scarcely realize. But I am keenly aware of the limitations of our colleges, as they now exist, for educating our youth to meet life in this world.

Dir. How would you, from the college viewpoint, size up this failure?

Prof. It's all tied to the stupidities of our lecture system. It reduces students to a state of being fit only to absorb an intellectual diet that has already been made into mincemeat by the professor. What is worse, the standard for college work is based on the average student; the superior one is ignored. And that gets us back to the question you raised, of rediscovering norms for university as well as secondary education.

Dir. I remember what a disappointment college was to me. I came to feel that the lecture system was a false substitute for the education I should have had. I could find little to differentiate college from high-school standards.

Prof. That's just what I also feel about our higher education. There is neither consideration nor encouragement of independent thought and research, nor is there adequate recognition of those who have the power to be great teachers. Did you happen to know that it is the number of papers and articles which a man publishes, rather than his success in teaching, which leads to academic advancement for university instructors? I need scarcely carry the implications of such values further.

Dir. No. I understand. It only encourages the perfunctoriness of our entrenched lecture system.

Prof. I've wanted my university to adopt the English system for years. If only they would cut out our mass of lectures and institute the tutorial system! Imagine the improvement if from the first year at college students were on their own to work independently, this to be supplemented by frequent consultations with specially assigned instructors. A few of our universities have moved in that direction, but the majority still believe you can talk education into the minds of immature adults.

Can you imagine in what a miserable position I find myself today—caught in the meshes of our lecture system! It's fatal to the development of any original thought. Such a premium is placed on the mechanical ability to repeat ideas to successive classes from year to year that in time even the strongest and most original professors succumb. As for the students—if they have any initiative to start with, it isn't long before they are drugged by the insidious stream of professorial words that lull and swathe them during four long years of college.

Dir. Yes. I've declared again and again that lectures and note-taking were forms of dope, to make impossible human efforts to act and think for ourselves. We agree that education should treat human beings as wholes, although it does not do so, and that the training of body and mind has been fatally split. We've now reached the question how to achieve a synthesis, so that mind and body function together.

Prof. Yes, unified or at least correlatively parallel, if not one.

Dir. But tell me, how do we go about treating the defects of human adjustment? Piecemeal. If an organ or limb fails to function, we only nurse that specific part. For instance, if a child has fallen arches, he's often forced to wear supports beneath the weakened muscles. If a child has eye-strain, he is given glasses. If his bowels are inactive, he is given laxatives. If he catches many colds, his tonsils are taken out. Our general remedial methods are to cut, dose, patch, and mend at the particular point of weakness. We are really not aware of the human organism as a functioning whole. We refuse to recognize its constant inadequacy of function until it gives out at some essential juncture.

Prof. What you are getting at is that we are all of us

really acting inadequately most of the time, and haven't sufficient knowledge of our own mechanisms to recognize the danger signals.

Dir. Yes, just so.

Prof. Could you show me some concrete ways you have of dealing more fundamentally with these problems here at the school?

Dir. Yes, I was coming to that. But would you first like an example nearer home? About yourself?

Prof. Oh, yes. (*Straightening himself up a little consciously.*) What bad habits have you spotted in my body?

Dir. (*smiling*). Don't look so worried. Please don't immediately start to shift your position if I draw attention to certain tensions in your posture. And don't be embarrassed if I speak to you about your own adjustments before we consider those of the children. For our own selves are, after all, the most immediate material for examination as to norms of human development.

Prof. Well, fire away. I shall perhaps be able to follow your argument more clearly after you have shown me just where my own maladjustment lies.

Dir. Have you worn those glasses long?

Prof. About a year and a half. Unfortunately I'm increasingly dependent on them as time goes on.

Dir. Naturally, you would be so.

Prof. Why? Because eye-strain increases with age if one is a steady reader?

Dir. That's what the oculist probably says.

Prof. Well, he tells me I have slight astigmatism. Holds out the hope that later I may be able to drop the use of my glasses.

Dir. Have you any friends dependent on glasses who as time goes by use them less and not more constantly?

Prof. No, none that I recall offhand.

Dir. Well, I don't set up to be an eye expert. But I do know from a rather varied experience with children and adults that eye-strain, like back-strain, abdominal strain, foot-strain, and throat-strain, is not such an isolated phenomenon as our medical specialists would have us believe. All these are symptoms of a lack of psycho-physical co-ordination throughout the body. And these maladjustments are not merely local and physical ailments. They include mental and emotional as well as physiological adjustments. It's a long story.

Well, to begin with, your eye focus could not be normal, since you carry your head at an oblique angle. Your chin consequently thrusts forward in such a way as to contract the muscles at the back of your neck, and this contributes to the voice-strain from which you suffer. Your eyes cannot focus satisfactorily because they are not in alignment with the objects they wish to see. They must constantly readjust to the backward tilting position of the head. In straining to do so, the normal freedom of your eye muscle movement is contracted. We know that chickens can be egg-bound. Do we realize that man can be muscle-bound? That we may lack the complete use of the muscles that give us correct sight just as we lack the co-ordinated use of legs, arms, and torso? We are too ready, with the help of scientific specialists, to accept the incapacities of our organism as hopelessly determined. In most cases the trouble is not in the failure of eyes to see, or throats to articulate, but in our inability to adjust eye- and other body-muscles to their full use.

Prof. Do you mean to say that you could tell by watching my movements that I have trouble with my speaking voice?

Dir. Yes.

Prof. At certain times my voice gives out completely.

Just when I want to give my most important lectures, of course.

Dir. And you have tried all the throat specialists?

Prof. Oh, yes.

Dir. But they don't cure it?

Prof. No. I rest as they advise, and then of course some of the hoarseness clears up. Their treatments are no more than a partial and temporary help. But I don't see yet how you could tell that I have this difficulty with my speaking voice. It's in perfectly good shape at present.

Dir. Well, I could tell just as clearly from the way you misuse your neck, shoulder, and throat muscles that your voice as well as your eyes are not under your control. I could tell by your original response that you were politely skeptical of my diagnosis that the source of your eye-strain was wrong muscle-tension and not organic defect.

Prof. That's true. I thought you were perhaps assuming too much. But the way you spotted the strain in my voice forces me to stop and reconsider. I suddenly realize how attached *I* am also to habitual methods of treating bodily symptoms as isolated conditions of disease instead of as manifestations of maladjustment throughout the organism.

Dir. Even though you had previously agreed, in theory, that the mechanism ought to be dealt with as a whole?

Prof. Yes. But I still don't see how you arrive at any concrete technique for that purpose.

Dir. But no one can consider any of the techniques available for basic readjustments of physical, emotional, or mental mechanisms with serious attention until he is convinced of the failure of other methods to deal with fundamental human orientation. I mean that one can't be concerned with such methods until one has run up a blind alley in one's own work or life. Arrived at the point

of despair, one may then seek out new techniques that are off the beaten track.

Prof. Why must one be at the end of one's rope before looking around at such new methods?

Dir. I'll tell you: because to do so one must move directly against the current of one's own environment. Our world is sold to science. The specialist is the priest of the modern world. And science deals with bodily symptoms in the sequential order of their appearance. Even though a cure of one symptom may give rise to others, they usually continue to treat our organism as series of loosely associated parts, and not as a single unit in which every indisposition relates to every other part of the bodily state.

Prof. I agree. The tone of medical science appears more authoritative than it has any right to be. Specialists treat every part of our bodies as though our structure were as unrelated as the sections of a Globe-Wernicke bookcase.

Dir. The difficulty in the transmission of these techniques for education lies in the fact that oral methods of theoretical teaching don't transform organic maladjustments. You can't teach teachers how to apply the principles of physical co-ordination or the technique of psychoanalysis by classroom lectures. No. Teachers themselves have got to *go through the experience* of being co-ordinated so as to receive an experience of normal functioning before they can develop proper kinaesthetic control. Until their own bodies are given proper co-ordination, they lack the actuality of such norms in dealing with children.

Prof. And for the application of psychoanalytic principles to education do you believe also that it is important for teachers themselves to have gone through an analysis?

Dir. Yes, for *some* sort of self-knowledge at any rate, for the reason I've just given you. We find ourselves, as I

see it, at a crisis in education. Children as well as adults have lost their sense of instinctive functioning. If we don't recover it, I see no use in this idle chase after mere intellectual, or verbal, knowledge. It therefore seems to me that our present task is not only education, but *re*-education.

Prof. But how are we going to regain these original functions of ours?

Dir. Well, as I was suggesting, before any serious modification can be brought about, more people have got to realize that the trouble exists. For instance, take your own attitude. Theoretically you agreed with me from the outset that the pressing problem of modern education was the discovery of genuine norms. Not many people I know would. Nevertheless, when it came to a consideration of the principles on which any of those techniques are based, you balked also. You discounted what I said when I tried to apply some of these techniques to the unco-ordinated parts of your own organism.

Prof. Yes, that's so. I begin to see more clearly now what you are driving at, that all the talk in the world on theories or techniques of re-education is of no use if the teachers themselves haven't found where the shoe pinches them. In short, educators will have to get busy and find out how their own organisms really function and fail to function. They will have to submit themselves to the discipline of these special techniques before they can master them as fundamentals of the new education.

Dir. Just so. Not theory, but self-practice is all that counts in this approach. And to convince you a step further, won't you stand, very still, just where you now are? Place your hands on the rim of that chair in front of you.

Prof. Yes, and what do you want me to do now?

Dir. I shall want you presently to raise the chair from

the ground with your two hands. But make no move to that end at present. Only note, without shifting any part of your body, the general position of your legs, arms, head, back, and so forth. Just observe the amount of tension with which your arms and hands are grasping that chair preparatory to lifting it.

Prof. Yes, I've done so.

Dir. And now will you drop your arms to your sides again and just let *me* place your two arms for you on the back of the chair. No, don't tense them. Leave them for me to pick up for you, so to speak. So. Now they are placed for you without tension.

Prof. Yes, and now—

Dir. Your hands are resting lightly against the top rim of the chair. Will you now try the experiment of pressing your fingers against the chair top with just the minimum of contraction necessary to lift it off the ground? (Professor *attempts to follow directions.*) No. Stop a moment; relax your fingers again. Were you aware that as you tensed your fingers to lift the chair you stiffened your right knee and jerked your shoulders slightly?

Prof. No. Really?

Dir. Now just try to think of relaxing your right knee and your shoulders *in order* to contract your fingers to lift the chair with the minimum of effort.

That time you did it perfectly.

Prof. I see now. In that simple act of lifting that chair I was bringing to bear a false preconception of the amount of effort needed to raise its weight.

Dir. Yes. You were contracted and set for the effort before you met the resistant obstacle. And instead of using just the degree of muscular effort demanded by the task of raising the chair, you had probably expended ten times that energy in preparing for the act itself. Your emphasis

was on the end instead of the means—the intermediate steps by which it could be attained without strain or effort.

Prof. Yes. It's typical of what we're all of us constantly doing.

Dir. Worse than that. We are misdirecting energy in two ways at once. There is anxiety lest we fail in the effort to meet a given situation; and there is also the wrong use of our muscles for the demands of a required activity.

Prof. Yes, I unconsciously hunched my shoulders and stiffened my knee as if that would help me to lift the chair.

Dir. Exactly. Actually those movements threw you off your natural balance and made the attempt more difficult. But you *felt* as though you were helping yourself along, that way.

Prof. Now that you've convinced me that I'm never doing what I mean to do with the minimum of effort, won't you begin to explain just *how* one can deal with this difficulty in a practical way?

Dir. Yes, the method is that of F. Matthias Alexander. But before following that up, I'd like first to bridge the gap between our bodily states of varying muscular tensions and those mental attitudes which we hold toward our own physical organisms. Then let's examine the rôle that emotion plays in the correlation of our bodily and mental states.

Prof. Yes. Go ahead. That's an important point.

Dir. You saw clearly, in your efforts to lift the chair, that you were wasting and misusing muscular energy.

Prof. Yes. I had the wrong mental attitude as to the amount of effort needed.

Dir. That's true. But what was more serious, you trusted your bodily *feeling* of how to lift the chair. But your body and all our physical organisms have lost, under the stress

and strain of modern life, their right instinctive functioning. And the wasteful movements you made with that chair are typical of what all of us are doing every time we happen to lift a dress-suit case, write a letter, or catch a train. We do not use the correct muscles for the necessary action.

Prof. Part of the difficulty, I can see, occurs at the point of contact between the mental orders and the physical reaction. But just where does the element of feeling enter into any activity, particularly in an action that may involve such responsibility as to cause fear or anxiety?

Dir. That, of course, is one of the most important elements in psychophysical co-ordinations. We try to test most of our bodily movements by the *feel* of them to ourselves. You certainly felt you were lifting that chair easily, with the least possible strain on your muscles?

Prof. Yes.

Dir. But you were totally unaware of the shoulder twitch or the stiffened knee until I drew your attention to them. Try something else to convince yourself of the unreliability of your own muscular sense.

Here is an experiment I'd like you to undertake:

Stand up for a moment, but don't begin to do what I'm going to ask you to until I finish explaining. It's a very simple movement. Just stand very still, keeping your body straight and steady while you raise your right leg from the ground by freeing your right knee. Don't make the movement sudden or extreme. There now, you've done it. That's right. Now will you step in front of this long mirror and watch yourself repeat it?

Prof. Why?

Dir. So that your own eyes can check and *see* just what I see in your bodily movements. And then tell me, how

did you *feel* while you were lifting and bending that leg?

Prof. Well, sort of unsteady. But I'm not much good at co-ordinating, you know.

Dir. But come and see your own movements in the mirror now as you go through that exercise. You'll find it illuminating. You, I realize, are trying to keep your supporting left leg and torso steady and still. But watch them carefully in that mirror as you lift your other leg.

Prof. Yes. I can see by my reflection how the balance of the body tips to one side. But how can that be helped?

Dir. You really think that such a slant of your body is necessary in order to balance while lifting one leg off the ground?

Prof. Why, yes.

Dir. Yet you know that a ballet dancer or an acrobat can balance on the tip of one toe without shifting the axis of the body to either side. Bodies, as mechanisms, contain within themselves the possibility of perfect mechanical equilibrium.

Prof. Yes, but I know my co-ordination is very poor.

Dir. But why? Not because you couldn't balance easily in that position. It is *you* who help to create your own disequilibrium. You are actually throwing yourself out of true co-ordination every single time you raise your leg, because you have a mistaken idea in relation to your bodily control. When I point it out to you, you will be able to attain the necessary movements for perfect balance with very little assistance from me.

Prof. How's that?

Dir. When you start to take your right foot off the ground you begin to *feel* insecure and try to steady yourself by tilting your body to the left. You are really help-

ing to throw yourself off your balance. You *feel* as though that movement would help hold your balance. I know; I've been through it too. We've actually lost our true sense of equilibrium. We don't really *know* that we are all of us able to stand as perfectly poised as flamingoes on a single leg as well as on a pair. Our kinaesthetic sensations have gone awry. We have lost, with rare exceptions, the instinctive, unconscious knowledge of bodily control. And so our ideas and our feelings about them tend to make our co-ordinations worse and not better.

Prof. What, then, is to be done about it?

Dir. I could, with more time at our disposal, illustrate the principles of physical co-ordination on your own body. It would be necessary for me to convince you more completely, by specific adjustments of your mechanism, how entirely mistaken your present mental attitudes and feelings concerning your own bodily actions really are. You would resist until I succeeded in persuading you to cease your misguided efforts to help me. When you were ready to inhibit your old muscular habits and to permit me to place you in positions that would reco-ordinate your body, you would then receive a fresh kinaesthetic experience. It would be of a kind that you could never give yourself and that you would never forget. I could place your mechanism in certain postures of equilibrium and train you to build up positions of tensionless balance.

Prof. Of course. I can't expect you to go into this complex technique at present; I sense at least your direction. You've led me a few steps further toward what I'd always suspected as the failure of our education. But it's rather terrific to realize as clearly as I do now that we literally have no control of our most ordinary bodily functions. By trying to think and feel about our movements we only increase our muddle. But how, then, in terms of

human adjustment, do you consider that our feelings should justly enter? How far dare we trust our feelings under any circumstances? And where do you think they relate themselves to the life of the body and the mind?

Dir. Do you want to know, then, where I stand in relation to the modern psychological theories as to the rôle of feeling in our human adjustment?

Prof. Yes.

Dir. Well, I can't subscribe completely either to the theories or to the technique of any school of psychoanalysis. For whereas they quite rightly attribute many disturbed physical states to emotional and mental causes, I don't find them ready to consider unbalanced emotional states as related to an improperly co-ordinated body. You see, I feel that you can uncover emotion, moving back and forth between the bodily and mental movements of the organism.

Prof. I don't quite follow you.

Dir. Well, I don't wonder. Let me see if I can state it more clearly. I find that mental states cause physical or muscular changes in the body, and such transformations lead to modifications of emotional states. There are men and women all around us today who have touched on some part of this truth as to the complex alternation that occurs between the activity and control of these three human systems. But each individual or group who has discovered some fraction of the truth is unwilling to accept others as contributory.

But I am equally aware from direct experience that insecurity in children may just as well be linked with inadequate muscular co-ordination as with parental complexes and organ inferiority. I have known young children to be entirely freed from childish fears by the psychophysical

co-ordination of their bodily mechanism.[1] Quite the reverse of analytic procedure, you see.

Prof. I get your point now. We are somehow transforming stations of energy, and the current can pass both ways. Inadequate adjustments of our spinal, visceral, and mental systems might just as well be altered by working from the bodily co-ordination of the spinal as by starting from the reconditioning of the other two systems.

Dir. Yes, but you realize that it would be almost impossible for me to convince most parents that our kinaesthetic sensations are unreliable. Their attitude would be more skeptical than yours. "What of it?" they would say, at least to themselves. "My child is quite as good if not better than most children. He comes to school to learn what he needs to know in order to hold his place in the world." And then variations on what schools should teach and children should learn might follow.

Prof. You're talking now of the average parent who still accepts the present formal school system.

Dir. Well, yes. And others, too. Parents aren't always as keen as they think they are in desiring new types of education for their children.

Prof. I suppose not. At some particular point they may have come to see the mistakes of our education and desire a change, without having considered the problem as a whole.

Dir. That's exactly what I'm getting at. Some parents may see where the old type of school has failed to supply live subject matter to an active, eager child; another realizes that an artistically gifted child is being warped in a formal school environment.

Prof. People naturally start to move away from an old

[1] F. Matthias Alexander, *Man's Supreme Inheritance* and *Constructive Conscious Control of the Individual.*

to a new view of life at the spot where they have themselves been thwarted.

Dir. Yes. And that brings us again to the condition of parents and children in these schools.

Prof. We're back at my old question as to the measure and direction of emotions in modern education.

Dir. Yes, you see one is still dealing with a condition of society where few people are aware that education should be concerned with the release of the emotional life and its co-ordination with the mental and the psychophysical functioning of the organism.

Prof. Of course, when that is not yet acknowledged as a norm for educational procedure, no finer distinctions can yet be made.

Dir. The life of feeling is not usually given its due in orthodox educational schemes. And this suppression of normal and spontaneous emotion is constantly blocking the mechanics of the formal school. But where children therefore fail to function, the child and not the system is usually blamed. So you see why it is difficult to raise these questions of re-education when ordinary education makes no allowance for what is normal to a child's life.

Fourteenth Dialogue

A Modern Stage Producer and the Director

They sit at the back of the auditorium. The curtains on the stage in front of them draw back, and a dress rehearsal of a school play begins. A group of children between ten and twelve years of age are giving a play they have created and produced by themselves.

Scene One

A peasant farm in Russia. A peasant Father *and* Son *are planting in the fields.* Son *works unwillingly and with dissatisfaction. He stops. There is singing behind the scenes of old Russian folk songs.*

Father. Come, come, my son, you must work. This is no time for idling. (Son *works for a while and then sits down, covering his face with his hands.*) Peter, Peter, are you dreaming? Are you asleep?

Son. Oh, Father, I hate this work!

Father. Hate this work! Hate to plant! Why, my son, we must plant. We must work to get our food.

Son. Every year it is the same thing. We sow and we reap. I'm tired of this.

Father. But every year we eat. We don't stop eating.

SON. We are living like the very cattle. They eat, they sleep, they work. Are we no better than they?

FATHER. Of course we are better than the cattle. We bring food out of the soil. We give it to them. Without us they would starve. We are their masters and they are our slaves.

SON. I don't care! I want to go to Moscow and become something great.

FATHER. Those are only dreams, my son. I had them once, too. You will get over them as I did.

SON. Must we stay here forever?

FATHER. As long as we live. We are like that tree there. Our roots are in the soil. If that tree wanted to move, it could not. Neither can we. (*The mother and youngest child of the family rush in with much joyous shouting and noise.*)

ALL (*excitedly*). A letter, a letter, a letter! Call Nina!

LITTLE SISTER. Come quick, Nina, Mamma wants you. It's a letter from America!

MOTHER. It's a letter from America! It says everybody's rich in America. They pick up money from the streets. They wear fine clothes. They don't have to make up their clothes, they buy them in the stores!

NINA. Beautiful clothes—I wish I could have them!

MOTHER. And they have cars that run in the air and cars that run without horses. And you turn something and the water comes out. And houses twenty times the size of our house and everything! It's wonderful!

SON. It's too wonderful to be true.

MOTHER. It's true! Can't you read it?

SON. It's better than Moscow! Let's go to America. (FATHER *shakes his head sadly.*)

NINA. Oh, Father, please let us go to America, please, please!

THE OTHERS (*joining in*). Please, please!

FATHER. We can't go. We just planted. What will become of the harvest?

MOTHER. In America you don't have to have the harvest; you can buy the things. Why, of course, we'll go.

FATHER. Where will we get the money from?

MOTHER. You must sell the land. There are plenty of people about who will buy it.

SON. Yes, yes, let us go!

FATHER. Go into the house and let me think about it. I will talk it over with you later.

CURTAIN

Producer (*turning to* Director.) That's a surprising opening.

Director. Yes. There are just two more scenes. And they all move with the same directness and simplicity as this one.

Prod. There's an amazing life in the whole production. How did they come to make their play? It has a sense of form and movement and dramatic quality that I didn't expect. They're not just reciting lines. There is an interplay within the group on the stage that depends on neither their words nor their costumes. Those children are really acting together. How did it come about? I'll admit to you now that I dreaded coming here this morning. I thought I should just have to sit through one more of those childish dressed-up plays, produced for the delectation of fond parents. But this—this is art, pure and simple and direct. The production and the play itself have a naïveté and poignance all their own. One feels it is done altogether by children who are aware of the spiritual values or perhaps the discrepancies in our modern world.

Dir. Yes. Let me tell you how the theme of the play evolved.

Prod. Do.

Dir. The children in this group had been saying for some time that they wanted to give a play. There was nothing to prevent them, except lack of an adequate subject.

Prod. Then your children usually make up their own plays?

Dir. Yes. Unless once in a while in one of the upper high-school groups they want to experiment with what they consider a more grown-up kind of production.

Prod. After this rehearsal is over, I wish you'd tell me how you build up the work in dramatics right through the school.

Dir. I'd like to. But now, before the curtain rises again, I'll just explain how this play came to life.

Several of the children in this group came to class with suggestions for a play. One boy wanted to dramatize a robber tale he had read, another a Japanese myth, and a third a romance about the Crusades. The class unhesitatingly vetoed all these suggestions. The ideas were not interesting enough for the time and work needed to carry them out.

A few days later, one of the girls came in and called an impromptu class meeting before school. "Say," she said, "why don't we have a play about America, instead of these imaginary Japanese gods, or mediaeval highway robbers?"

"Fine idea," agreed the class, "but what shall it be?" Then using the opening she had made for herself, the child continued, "As I lay in bed last night, a wonderful idea came to me. You remember last week we went to see those Russian refugee workshops for our social science work. And we all noticed how beautiful the old embroid-

ered smocks and linens were that they made in Russia from their own designs. And then we spoke of the ugliness of some of these new and modern embroideries, those now being made here in America. And you remember they told us those designs we thought uninteresting were made to order for rich American ladies. They were not true Russian peasant designs at all. Now why couldn't we show what happens to the immigrant when he comes to America and gets disappointed when he can't be true to himself?"

An enthusiastic chorus met this plan. From all the children, "Yes, yes." "First the peasants in Russia," suggests another child, "and then a New York scene in the tenements." Another adds, "I've been downtown and seen the dirty crowded places they have to live in." "And," said a fourth, "we could use some of the Russian folk songs and dances we know, for the first scene. And make that beautiful and peaceful, in contrast to the rush and dirt and crowding of the lower East Side. And we could make the children when they come to America lose their respect for their parents, just because they can't speak the language and act like Americans."

And so the plan for the play grew. It was based on something that touched their own emotional experience. But of course, without a certain previous background in initiating and developing group plays, and without a particularly understanding type of teacher, such a play could never come to life at all.[1]

Prod. That's what I know so well from my own experience. I want to understand the steps by which these children learn to work together in so free and yet so organic a fashion. The outstanding point of this production is that it's *not literary*, but *it is dramatic*. And in that sense

[1] Miss Berta Rantz of the Walden School is the teacher to whom credit must be given for directing the groups who developed this play material.

it differs from any amateur production of either children or adults I've come across.

Dir. Well, these children make their own plays. But they don't write them out first.

Prod. Oh! That helps to explain the spontaneity.

Dir. They decide on a theme or plot, discuss its possibilities. Sometimes certain episodes or themes take form before others. Then they try working on those experimentally. They discuss and sketch the characters of the play. A scene may be tried out in pure pantomime without a single word. Sometimes the climax of a play crystallizes before the minor episodes. But the play itself grows out of a group. There are sure to be some children who have a keener dramatic sense than others, but every one gets a chance to share in the production. The play is never written in final form with carefully set speeches. The plot is developed. Every one gets a turn to try out the different characters, modifying and adding to them as they play, until the group decides on the best actor for each rôle. But the exact dialogue never remains quite the same, either in rehearsal or production. They go into a play expecting to improvise while keeping to the main theme.

Prod. So you've gone straight back to the original tradition, to the true source of improvisation in the early Italian comedy.

Dir. Yes. Our ideal approximates more nearly the old *commedia dell' arte* than the modern theater. As far as possible, we emphasize pantomime and improvisation—an attempt to help children discover that gesture, variety of bodily expression and tone of voice, rather than mere utterance of spoken words, are the essence of dramatic expression.

Prod. If such a training were only carried to completion, we might some day have a genuine theater in America. But

how in the world can you find the people to teach that way?

Dir. It's not easy, of course. In the years that I've been interested in this approach to dramatics with children, how few teachers have I discovered capable of sustaining their share in such an attempt!

There goes the curtain. I'll tell you more about how we work out our plays after this scene.

[The children's play continues.]

Scene Two

A village scene. Groups of peasants and villagers talking excitedly.

Villager. Do you know they're going to America!

Pot Vender. Now look at this pot. You never saw such a nice pot.

Peasant Woman. I didn't come to buy pots. I came to see them off.

Villager. Do you know, they are going to be awfully rich in America.

Pot Vender. I'll be rich, too, if you'll buy a pot. (Little Sister *comes in with her friend.*)

Little Sister (*weeping*). Oh, but you can't go to America and play with me any more. (*Brightening.*) I have an idea. Let's go and ask your mother if you can go to America with me. (*They run out.*)

Nina (*to her friend*). I am never going to forget you. I am very happy to go, but I shall never forget you.

Nina's Friend. I'll write to you often.

Son's Friend. What are you going to do in America?

Son. I am not going on a farm. In America they do everything by machinery. I'm going to be a mechanic. (*Enter* Little Sister, *weeping bitterly.*)

NINA. Tell sister what's the matter.

LITTLE SISTER. Her mother said she can't come to America, and I'll never see her again.

NINA. Don't cry any more, I'll sing you a nice song. (*Much singing, dancing, and merrymaking.*)

POT VENDER. I know some one who wrote me a letter in America. He said he didn't pick up money in the streets at all. (*The hilarity continues. Gradually all go out.* LITTLE SISTER *stays behind.*)

LITTLE SISTER. She promised me a present. Where is it? I can't go to America, she said she would give me a present! Where is she? (*Finally little girl comes in and gives her a doll. People still leaving.*)

POT VENDER (*running after them with a pot*). A pot free!

CURTAIN

Prod. Again. They've done it! What is so moving about that little episode is the way those children actually create that simple Russian village scene. With its group of peasants, chattering, selling, gossiping, laughing, dancing, singing, and weeping. The class is just a handful, and yet they have created a sense of mass as a background to the leave-taking of that family for America. Their sense of selection and restraint is remarkable. They might easily have had the whole family on the stage to say farewell. Instead, how much more effective to have had just those two children, pulling themselves away from their source in the Russian soil, while the rest of the family wait for them off stage. It's so interesting. They didn't do the obvious thing. And yet it always remains simple in quality and form. I wonder whether they can live up to such a promise in the American scene. Frankly, I'd be surprised

if they could cope with it. It's more than most adults are up to.

Dir. Well, here's America.

[The curtain rises. The children have painted a backdrop of a jagged New York skyline in the distance. In the foreground tumble-down tenements, with lines of wash hanging from the window.]

Scene Three

America. Mother *sitting on the doorstep, peeling potatoes, in shabby old clothes. Her youngest child at her feet.*

A Passer-by. Do you know where number sixty is?

Mother. Yes, go right down there to the left.

A Passing Neighbor. Oh, good morning! How have you been lately?

Mother. I have been fine. How are you and how is little Jimmy?

Neighbor. Oh, I am fine and Jimmy is getting better.

Mother. Aren't potatoes terribly high? It's one of the best things you can get, though, to nurse the children.

Neighbor. Yes. Good-by.

Umbrella Mender. Umbrellas! Umbrellas! Umbrellas to fix! (*Exit.*)

Peddler. Hot dogs for sale! Hot dogs for sale! Hot dogs! Hot dogs! (*Exit.*)

Newsboy. Extra! Extra! All about the big fire on the East Side! Extra! (*Exit.*)

Young Daughter. Ma, give me a penny.

Mother. No, we haven't got enough pennies.

Daughter. I want a penny! Give me a penny! Give me a penny! A penny!

MOTHER (*taking out her purse*). Look, there are only five pennies.

DAUGHTER. I don't care. Ma, please, please, give me a penny! You will give me a penny.

MOTHER. All right, here, dear.

DAUGHTER (*dancing*). Goody, goody, I have a penny. (*Runs out. Coming back soon, speaking to her little friend.*) Don't you wish you had what I have? (*She sucks a lollypop. The children fight for the candy.*) Ma! Ma! (MOTHER *comes to her rescue. Enter* FATHER.)

MOTHER. Hello, dear, how's your work today?

FATHER. Hard, hard, as usual, and little pay. I almost broke my back getting a stone out of a ditch. Rubbish! Rubbish! (*Kicking it.*) Always rubbish! Always in front of my door. They said we could pick up money on the streets, and all we pick up is rubbish! (*Enter* ANNA, NINA's *jazzy American friend. She stops to powder her nose.*)

ANNA (*in a tough voice*). Hello, where's Nina?

MOTHER. She hasn't come home yet. How are you?

ANNA. All right, I'll wait for her. (*Slouches against the doorway.*)

MOTHER. It's a nice day, isn't it?

ANNA. Suits me. (*Chewing a piece of gum. Enter* NINA.)

NINA. Hello, Anna! Oh, what a pretty dress! Gee, I wish I had it!

ANNA. Oh, it's all right, I got it in the five and ten.

NINA. What's up tonight?

ANNA. Nothing, come on over to my house.

NINA. All right. (*To her mother.*) Haven't you any pride, to sit here on the doorstep and peel potatoes? Why don't you peel them in the house! And look at father's clothes! Can't he keep them clean?

MOTHER. Your father is tired, he works hard. Is it his fault that his clothes are dirty? Haven't you any regard for your father?

NINA. Oh, bother! (*Enter* SON.)

MOTHER. It's bad enough to be poor, but it's worse to lose your children's respect.

FATHER. I wish we were in Russia. In Russia my children loved me; they looked up to me; they told me everything they were doing. I came here for them, and now we have lost them.

MOTHER. Oh, I wish I was back in Russia!

SON. Oh, my, it's not as bad as that! Look, I am a mechanic and soon I'll be able to support you. How's that?

MOTHER. You're my only hope. Look at Nina! She doesn't pay any attention to us. She works and uses everything for herself. She takes our money, and she doesn't even give us her love.

NINA. Oh, I don't want you to say that! Oh, I don't want you to say that! I want you to be proud of me. I don't want you to say that. I am sorry, very sorry, I'll never do it again! (MOTHER *embraces her.*)

MOTHER. It's all right, dear (*petting her*). It's all right.

YOUNG DAUGHTER. Me too, me too! Pet me too, mother! Sing me a song, father. (FATHER *sings farm song. Family sit around him on the steps together.*)

NINA. Oh, remember when we used to sing that in Russia? (*The whole family sings an old peasant song together.*)

CURTAIN

Prod. Those youngsters have really pulled it off. Who would have guessed that ten- or eleven-year-old kids would have selected such a theme for a play, and then

succeeded in creating the atmosphere to put it across? Again, it's not the words said, it's the cumulative weight of the drama that they created together. What they say is so simple. But it's always poignant. And the just phrase is always there, for the given episode in the action of the drama. Its rightness never seems an accident. More than ever, I want you to tell me how this play grew. Not only did the children themselves have to attack play production in a fresh way, but the teacher who has worked with them understood how to draw forth and unify the creative impulse in her group. She obviously understood the true value of their naïve originality, and yet she must have had a fine sense of the theater to help them condense the essentials so effectively within the limits of the form selected.

Dir. Perhaps the most direct and convincing answer to some of your questions would be to read you a stenographic report, such as we often take down in school records, of an earlier rehearsal and discussion of this same play. In it you hear the class at work with their teacher on that last scene of the family in America.

Prod. Oh, good! That's just what I want. Nothing else could give me such a concrete picture of how the children and teacher work together on a play.

Dir. I think I ought to explain before reading this to you which of the children who are mentioned by their own names in this discussion eventually took the chief rôles in the play. Alice becomes the mother; Edith, the little sister; Lillian, Nina, the older sister; Margaret, the father; and Albert, the son. This discussion and experiments in playing the third scene took place, remember, two months ago. Nothing had yet been done about the making of costumes and scenery. The final dramatic form was still undecided.

THE TEACHER. Let's go back to the beginning of the third scene. What do you think you want to do there? What are you going to have?

ALICE. The kid might come in sucking a stick of candy and say, "Oh, can I go to the movies?" It would show how New York has changed them; how much of their manners they lost. In Russia they were content, and now they want everything. The more they have, the more they want.

EDITH. They must not be content.

ALICE. And the sister might come in and say, "Let's go."

EDITH. And she laughs at the old man.

LILLIAN. And she might even say "Shut up" to her father. She has no respect for him. In Russia she would be good to him, but here she has no respect for him.

EDITH. And then, the next part, they begin to sing that old song in the fields and—

LILLIAN. And then she begins to feel sorry and start singing.

ALICE. I think the daughter and son should be the main part.

LILLIAN. And the child is spoiled.

TEACHER. Well, how are you going to have the father?

LILLIAN. He's sitting on the doorsteps and terribly ashamed. The mother might be peeling potatoes and might be sitting there and resting.

ALICE. And the daughter ought to be using up most of his money for herself. The girl takes most of the money that the father earns.

LILLIAN. Oh, I know. The mother's sitting on the doorstep peeling potatoes and the father's coming home from work tired.

TEACHER. Well, let's try the father coming home from work.

EDITH. One thing I think is that his expression should be that of a hard-working, determined man.

TEACHER. Edith, will you do the part of the father?

EDITH. The wife should be sitting on the doorstep. (EDITH *runs out and then comes in as the* FATHER. *She has a saddened and hopeless expression on her face. She sits down.*) I haven't anything to say; it's just sort of a worried look.

TEACHER. I wonder if any of the things he's thinking about would show in his actions as he comes down the street.

LILLIAN. Somebody could be just going by and carrying some papers and scattering them before the door.

ALICE (*picking up the papers with a look of disgust*). Oh, the dirtiness of these people, dropping paper in front of our door. Can't they throw it in front of their own door!

LILLIAN. But why should she take up the papers and then throw it in front of somebody else's door? That wouldn't be right.

EDITH. I don't think she ought to say, "Let them throw it in front of their own door." I should think she'd put it in the pail.

TEACHER. Are you picturing to yourselves the feelings of a man who finds dirt before his door?

EDITH. He might be a little cross. He might kick it away.

TEACHER. What else can you picture besides paper?

RUTH. Orange peel.

MARGARET (*trying the part of* FATHER. *Kicking dirt.*) Why do they always have to be throwing things around! Can't they put it some place?

HENRY. Margaret says, "Why do they have to be throwing things around, why don't they put it some place?"

and then she kicks it some place. Why doesn't she pick it up?

TEACHER. This man is tired after a day's work. He is disgusted with living in America. He comes home and finds this before his door. Do you think he's going to talk in a sensible, logical fashion?

LILLIAN (*coming in as the* FATHER). Oh, oh, always rubbish in front of my door! (*Kicking rubbish viciously.*)

EDITH. I think she's a little too tough.

TEACHER. Get the sense of complete dissatisfaction. It happens every day.

LILLIAN. Let's have the wife sitting there.

RUTH. Let the wife come out in front of the door. She might come with a cousin from some place.

TEACHER. How are you going to have the husband and wife act toward each other? Is there any difference in husband and wife in their relation to each other?

EDITH. They love each other and should show some sort of closer feeling.

LILLIAN. They don't seem to have their children any more.

TEACHER. Are these people going to be driven further apart, or because the children have left them, is it going to bring them closer together?

ALICE. I don't think there's as much respect for themselves and for their children. The children have no respect for them either.

EDITH. I think they love each other still more because they're alone and have no one else.

TEACHER. Let us try this scene. Alice, will you try the wife? Ethel, you try the part of the father.

ETHEL (*walking in as* FATHER). Peeling potatoes out here?

HENRY. Ethel comes over and grabs both her hands, the potatoes, and the knife, just like a little child.

TEACHER. I hesitated about you, Ethel, because you haven't a real feeling for the part of a man; you have more of a child's feeling.

HENRY. He just comes in and shakes hands with his wife and—

ALICE. I'd kiss her.

LILLIAN. Perhaps she could just see him coming down the street and walk down the steps to greet him.

TEACHER. What do you think about the other entrance of the father? Do you still want that?

ALL. Yes!

MARGARET. First he comes in and says hello and then he sees the rubbish.

LILLIAN. Oh, I have something! Let me try the father! (*Coming in as* FATHER.) Oh, why do they always put rubbish in front of my door? Oh, I have had such a hard day's work and no thanks for it!

TEACHER. What's the thing that's troubling you most here, Father?

EDITH. He came to America.

ALBERT. He could say, "I thought we could pick money off the streets," or something like that.

TEACHER. Do you want to try the father's part?

LILLIAN. Oh, I have an idea for the father!

HENRY. I have an idea for the father!

MARGARET. Oh, let me try the father!

TEACHER. All right, Margaret. (ALICE *as* MOTHER *peeling potatoes.*)

MARGARET (*as* FATHER). Oh, rubbish again! Always rubbish.

ALICE (*as* MOTHER). Isn't it terrible!

MARGARET. Oh, I am so tired; it never used to be this way in Russia! They said here you could pick up money off the streets; all you pick up is rubbish. I get up at sunrise and work and work and work.

TEACHER. That's very interesting.

EDITH. That's good! That's peachy!

ALBERT. If the wife were sitting on the stoop and peeling potatoes, wouldn't she notice the rubbish?

TEACHER. Doesn't it often happen that there's rubbish on the floor and I notice it and you don't? We haven't this part of the story worked out at all. We want to get a lot of ideas today and keep some of them. Henry, will you go out now? (ALICE *sits down, still the* MOTHER.)

HENRY (*comes in and shakes hands with* ALICE). I have had a hard day's work today.

ALICE. We don't even get our food here, and we got it in Russia.

HENRY. There's no place where you can find any nice country.

TEACHER. Is there any idea that Henry has expressed that we might keep?

ALBERT. The husband could say, "Why did we ever come here?"

RUTH. Maybe they wish they could go back.

LILLIAN. I have an idea: "Oh, this rubbish, why do they forever put it in front of our door! I have done a hard day's work today. What is my thanks? Why did we ever come to America? We came here to take money off the streets! Where is the money?"

ALICE. We don't even get our food here.

LILLIAN. I work day after day! What is my thanks? My children go away from me.

MARGARET. The daughter might come in and say, "Why are you sitting on the steps?"

ALBERT. If all this takes place on the steps, then wouldn't people be looking at them?

LILLIAN. They're not living on Fifth Avenue where people go by.

ALBERT. Nobody lives on Fifth Avenue, there are only stores there.

TEACHER. There are people who live in parts of New York like this where they do sit on stoops and discuss things—discuss their family affairs.

EDITH. Oh, sure, they do lots of things.

HENRY. I live down there; sure they do it.

ALICE. They do it in the Bowery.

LOUISE. You ought to be very careful about this. First he puts a hatchet on the chair, and Alice sits right down on it.

TEACHER. Right now we are interested in getting the characters of these people. If we finally decide upon this scene and the father puts the hatchet on the chair, will she sit on it?

EDITH. Oh, of course not.

TEACHER. There is another new point that's very good that Lillian brought in. A new idea there. The greatest sorrow is not only money, but the idea of the loss of his children.

LILLIAN. He wants to make his children happy.

TEACHER. What do you mean—by the loss of his children?

ALICE. Not that they're lost on the street. But they have gone away from him.

LILLIAN. Let's bring in the daughter.

TEACHER. You know, the first person to come in need not be the father. It might be a neighbor. She would be expecting him any moment, and somebody else comes

in who's not the father. She might talk to the neighbor for a while and go on peeling potatoes.

LILLIAN. She'd better be a man, so the wife can mistake him for her husband.

ELSA. I want to be a neighbor.

TEACHER. All right.

ELSA (*walking in very calmly*). Good day! Are you busy today?

ALICE. I am very busy for my family.

LILLIAN. She acts like an old woman (*meaning* ALICE). It's good.

ALICE. Maybe I would act differently in New York. Maybe because of the bustle in New York my voice would get much louder. The noise of the city might make my voice louder. (JANE *takes the part of a neighbor.*) Good morning.

JANE. Good morning (*walking by*).

EDITH. That's good.

ALBERT. May I make a criticism? When Alice said hello, she said hello and walked right on.

TEACHER. I didn't get any particular meaning out of Jane's part.

ALICE. The next neighbor may be a gentleman from a good part of New York, and she might get up and make a curtsy.

LILLIAN (*coming in very jauntily*). Peeling potatoes, huh? You like it?

ALBERT. She acts like a drunkard.

MARGARET. I'm a man. (*Walking in quickly and stopping before* ALICE.) Could you tell me where Kelly's fish store is?

ALICE. Over there.

MARGARET. I was hoping that Kelly's fish store was right over there.

ALICE. Let me be a neighbor now.

EDITH. I'll be the mother then.

ALICE (*entering as neighbor*). How do you do! How are you this morning? Do you know that my daughter went away?

EDITH. Where to?

ALICE. Oh, I forgot where the place is. It is some place around the country. Now I have to be going. Good-by.

LILLIAN (*as neighbor*). Peeling potatoes! Good for an old woman like you. (HELEN, *as neighbor, stops before* EDITH *and powders her nose.*)

ETHEL (*as neighbor, stops before* EDITH). Good day!

EDITH. What do you want? Are you looking for somebody?

LILLIAN. She acts like a child, a little like herself.

TEACHER. As soon as you see something that helps to build up a part I want you to be able to recognize it. I think Edith was splendid because she was so much this person, so real, that no matter what kind of person came by she had a natural response.

ALICE. I think the way Helen stood right before the door and powdered her nose, it seemed so unnatural.

HELEN. Well, look at the way Lillian came in. Would you walk along the street like that with your hands on your hips?

TEACHER. What's more important is to question what we think of that particular character. Was it interesting to you?

LILLIAN. It would be too much like the daughter's part.

EDITH. She might be one of Nina's friends.

TEACHER. That might show what kind of person Nina is going with. I like the idea of one neighbor coming and gossiping with the mother. Let's go back to the father and the mother sitting on the stoop. We have worked

out the idea of the father coming home dissatisfied. His children have gone away from him. The whole thing is very discouraging. The last thing the father says would be the most hopeless thing of all. What do you think is the mother's part in such a case? He has come home from work discouraged and fatigued.

EDITH. Don't you think we should have the children come in?

TEACHER. Which comes in first?

ALICE. The daughter.

EDITH. I don't like that idea—I don't think she ought to be altogether spoiled. I think I'd be a little bit nicer.

LILLIAN. She could say, "Can I have a penny for candy?" and then run away.

TEACHER. All right, let's try this. Alice, you be mother again.

EDITH. And I'll be the child. "Ma, could you give me a penny? I want to buy some candy. (ALICE *counting out money.*) Thank you."

HELEN. If they're so poor, the mother ought to be more saving.

ALBERT. She might say, "Look how hard Father has to work to get a penny." (*Various children try the part of the child.*)

(*End of rehearsal.*)

Prod. Yes. That has given a satisfying answer to some of my questions. There's no doubt these children were alive to the interior drama of their own creation. And how deft the teacher was in focusing the cross currents of group ideas and impulses! I can see now that without doubt the raw material for unexpected and original dramatic forms lies right within the powers of such children, perhaps in groups even younger than these. But how in the world

find adults who combine the training and knowledge of necessary techniques with the interest and understanding to hold a balance between direction, encouragement, and original expression?

Dir. That's just what I'd like to see you accomplish with a group here in the school.

Prod. Frankly, I tremble at the prospect of attempting such a thing. The results might be marvelous, but the risk seems too great. And I'd hate to be responsible for any damage done to a group of youngsters like these.

Dir. Oh, you exaggerate the possibilities at both extremes! I believe every teacher has moments when he or she feels that it would be better not to try out fresh approaches in education, lest they fail. But then, that's always on the false assumption that if one did not try to give the children the best of what one knew, they would be getting something better from repeating the old stuff. But we know that's not true.

Take, for example, this play you've just seen. I have no illusions about it. I know how far it is from our hopes for the future. But as you realized, it would take rare teachers, with a genuine sense of the theater and a more practical training in its methods, to carry out what we have in mind. But we haven't, as you know, found the right people yet. That's why we need the help and cooperation of such producers as you. If you lend us a hand with our problems, if you realize the possibilities of such a place as this, I believe we can eventually train our teachers to understand the practical problems of production.

Prod. That would be something well worth aiming at, if the theater itself were in a better way. Don't you realize that after all, you are setting up ideals that no Broadway producer can touch? We haven't any actors any more in

our younger generation. Only stars or stellar aspirants who exalt their own idiosyncrasies, and at best flaunt accidental talent as substitute for real training. The actors, I assure you, are simply impossible. They think I am mad, and take offense when I even try to get them as a group to understand, to have some idea or conception of a play, before they run off to find ways of exhibiting themselves in their own parts. They simply don't know and don't care about the theater, except as a means of exploiting themselves. No wonder, then, when I see you here really getting a group of children to the point of originating their own themes and improvising their parts as they work, I am thrilled and overjoyed. It's like rain after drought. I doubt whether you school people can learn much from us at the present time, but I know I can come here and get a great deal.

Dir. I don't believe that's quite accurate. Let me get down to some of my concrete problems, and you'll see how much you could help me. It's not only the children who must be freed from their inhibitions and false notions about plays, but the teachers themselves are all tied up by their own wrong education.

Prod. I hadn't thought of it from that angle. Of course there is no justification for assuming, because teachers have achieved a new approach to education, that they should therefore automatically achieve a fresh understanding of the various arts; and the theater is, after all, quite special in both form and organization. That was stupid of me.

Dir. You're right. An extraordinarily able teacher, who may combine psychological penetration, creative understanding, and unusual teaching ability, may nevertheless be quite unequipped to meet the new problems a new theater creates. As you know, it is usual for the teacher of Eng-

lish to be the director in the production of plays, when there is specialization of subjects in the older groups. But as you and I realize, the ability to teach English doesn't necessarily involve a sense of the theater. You see, there is no one who can do this without help and direction. After all, the giving of plays has never been a serious part of a school program. It is only thrown in for amusement, rather than an integral part of the year's work.

Prod. Yes. But I don't quite see how you could ever carry out the promise of a thorough dramatic training for these children and still include the whole mass of present-day school subjects.

Dir. Certainly it could not be done in schools as they are now. As things now stand, it is a constant struggle in the older groups to find time to get them in at all, as college requirements become more pressing and the children's productions grow more elaborate. We have to limit the periods for the preparation of a play far more than we should like to do. Last year, for instance, the fifteen-year-old class developed the idea of a pageant and drama of evolution, called *From Dust to Dust.* This grew rapidly both in scope and proportion. It opened with the impregnation of matter with life. The drama begins in the strange half-lights of cosmic space, and out of the shadows two grains of dust swirl into combination, grow, and expand. Their dialogue contains the experiments of their movement, nutrition, and reproduction. It is a drama of those who experiment or are experimented upon and survive. Through the cycle of the evolution of life, through the phases of animal adaptation, up through a monkey scene, the animals evolve. Then comes primitive man and the conflict between his struggle for the material necessities of existence and the spiritual aspiration of personal creation. The evolution of man was to include epi-

sodes from ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome, through mediaeval, Renaissance, and modern times. The children were a bit staggered as they envisaged the dimensions of the plan. The limits of time and school conditions made it necessary to select only certain scenes out of the original scheme.

The growth of that play was especially interesting. It expressed so definitely the contradictory emotional states of adolescence. The group as a whole discussed and planned the play. But for some scenes a group of children worked out an idea in pantomime, or two or three developed some episode at home and then brought it into the group for consideration. The opening of the play is impressive, and gives a sense of awe and wonder before the drama of embryonic existence. And of a sudden they turn from a sense of exaltation to a sense of the ridiculous and the grotesque, from a moment of inspired humility to one of youthful bombast or arrogance. From romantic yearning to scientific self-confidence, they run the gamut of contradictory moods that obsess our adult world as well as theirs.

The finale occurs in a modern school, A. D. 3000. Infant prodigies of two, in goggles and blue rompers, hold forth on the discoveries of new light rays and their baby-carriage romances. The professor, true to the tenets of this very modern school, announces, when one of his students is about to choke himself to death with his own experiment, "Well, I'm sure I can't do anything about it. The policy of the schools definitely sets forth that the instructors are by no means to interfere with a pupil while he is expressing himself."

Prod. So these youngsters know how to give a satiric thrust, and laugh up their sleeve at the whole lot of us! It's delightful, from what you add to my own direct im-

pressions, to realize how fearless they are about throwing burlesque, comedy, tragedy, and satire into the same large pot. From what you report of other plays, their gayety seems to add poignance to their sense of awe and wonder. Apparently they have great courage, to judge by the way they undertake a vast conception like this one on evolution, without stopping to measure the limited means at their disposal. It suggests a magnificent faith in their own powers to do—the only way mountains are ever moved.

Dir. Oh, yes. They are quite merciless at times, mocking the antics of the human race. But in other moods they become terribly earnest. A profound yearning drives them in search of some unassailable truth, some ultimate value in this universe, to hold them secure amid the gyrations of this swirling chaos which we call our lives.

You alluded to their courage in tackling the universe with their limited means. Why, two of our girls went further! They even grappled with the infinite. They made a play on the evolution of religion. I never saw it, but one of them told me about it, how she and her friend staged and planned it at summer camp and drew the other girls into their scheme. As she described it to me, the play began in prehistoric times, with the worship by every one of three strange figures of ancient and tribal gods. In this scene was pictured symbolically the primitive phase of religious worship based on fear. There followed a happier state in the next scene. The crowd, filled with simple joy and faith in religion, its hopes and promises, danced and sang, and celebrated the ancient oracles. "But already," the girl explained to me, "there were a few beginning to break away from the crowd. There were the doubters. They began to dabble with experiments in science. They learned to read the stars. And in this scene you get an astronomer whose predictions from the sky signs do not

agree with the promises of the oracle to the people. But no one will listen to him yet. This scene is meant to show how a few people had already the courage to go away from the general mass." She told me then about the mediaeval scene. This she described as taking place in a church, the crowd bowing and praying as the bishop and his procession came up the aisle. But now people begin to refuse to bow down and pray; so the church guards came and enforced conformity with threats of physical violence. This scene, where the heretics are forced to their knees, the girl explained, "shows how even more people, as time went on, had their own faith; they just didn't believe in the popular belief any longer. And the church at that time was very powerful and didn't like it. And that was why I dressed so grandly as the bishop, to keep on impressing the crowd.

"In the modern age," she continued, "the three scenes are all supposed to take place at the same time. We called the people that came on in the first scene, all dressed exactly alike, 'the plodders.' There were five people in high-heeled shoes, one-piece dresses conventionally cut; they walked across the stage, first two people, then one, then two more. All kept step, same tempo, just slow, uninteresting. Each went toward the church door. Each would bow suddenly and walk into the church. This scene was just to show how all people thought alike and did alike." And then the girl added, "Do you know there was one girl at camp who was so stupid that she said, 'Well, all the people I know who go to church don't dress and act alike.' She simply didn't understand what symbolism means. I gave up after a while trying to talk to her. I told her she didn't have to be in the play at all if it didn't appeal to her.

"Then came a scene of the 'radicals,' meant to be simul-

taneous with the 'plodders' scene—people dressed in wild colors, gesticulating; a soap-box, a fiery scene, with an arrest by a policeman. And a soap-box orator allowed to go on gesticulating alone into empty space when the crowd dispersed. The third scene was the 'experimenters,' going from one thing to another, trying in vain to find something permanent in life outside themselves.

"The final act was a return to the first setting, where the ancient gods were once again arranged at the back of the stage in religious postures, in a triangular form—the middle one kneeling, the two others sitting on each side with legs crossed. Each god shines with a bright light.

"A group of people come in, singing. This scene is a struggle between these people and the ancient gods. This group is all dressed in bronze-colored silk, with light shining from inside themselves. The dresses were sort of transparent, and each of us had an electric flashlight that gave forth a lovely glow from under our silken clothes. We then sang the hymn:

> The Lord is my light and my salvation,
> Of whom then shall I be afraid,
> Of whom then shall I be afraid?
> Though a host of men may rise against us,
> And there be war,
> Still shall I put my trust in Thee.

This group of people symbolized that each person now had his own belief. He didn't bother about other people. He no longer had any fear.

"The gods in the play understand this, get angry, gesticulate, as if conquered, and then all their lights go out, and they are no longer seen. They could not fight us, people who had no fear. That was where our strength lay. The lights within us grow strong, the gods who thrive on

fear have disappeared into darkness, and the curtain goes down as we finish singing our hymn."

Prod. Will these children, I wonder, be able to keep their imagination when they go out in the world?

There's an extraordinary quality to those symbolic episodes. And that child's complete awareness of the literal mind of the other youngster who balked at the use of symbolic expression!

Are such understanding and such untrammeled use of material to be found in many of these school plays?

Dir. Oh, yes. Those who think and feel creatively in one form are likely to carry it over into the medium of another art. Children interested in symbolic representation are just as likely to change their method and do a very realistic production another time.

Prod. I can see how an untrammeled imagination is as necessary on the part of the teacher as of the group of children.

Dir. Yes. She has to be immensely sensitive to the first groping attempts at symbolic expression, in order that the children may gain courage to trust themselves, instead of repeating all that has been said and done by others.

I still recall with delight a very simple play about George Washington which a group of eight-year-old children gave some ten years ago. It was no cherry-tree tragedy, but an invention of their own. How George went in search of a wife, was its theme. In the episode I like to remember, he was standing, side stage, unseen by the pretty girl who was intent on milking a cow. The important thing was that girl's pantomime. She sat on a three-legged stool. No other stage property was in sight. Her body poised at a forward angle. Her hands reached forth into space, and with a few swift and rhythmic strokes her gesture created the full-uddered patient cow, submitting

to her will. The child drew the few essential lines that made it significant pantomime. To this day, that image holds as clear as the balanced design of a Japanese fox dance that I saw quite as many years ago. There's another bit of symbolic simplification that I recall. It was a May Day festival, given spontaneously by a nine-year-old class, without any previous preparation, as a surprise for their teacher. All they did was to pull a tall hat-tree out into the center of their classroom. That was their Maypole. To it they attached a mass of gay streamers, ribboned strips of crêpe paper. One half of the class, seizing the lower ends of the ribbons, danced sunwise around this hat-tree Maypole. The others circled the opposite way, bound together by a simple four-inch band of manila drawing-paper, upon which were scattered myriads of colored crayon dots. That, if you please, was the garland of flowers for the festival of spring. The believing grace with which those children danced transformed that paper strip into a wreath of flowers, the floor into a greensward, and an awkward hatrack into the Maypole of other days.

Prod. How miraculous! If only we had ways to keep all that alive as they grew older.

Dir. That's just where you come in.

Prod. But oh, how difficult to bring such powers to their true maturity! Tell me now a little more of your preliminary work with the younger children. Pantomime is surely one of the most primitive modes of dramatic expression. Do you use it much with the little ones?

Dir. Yes. In order to get children into pure dramatization of extremely simple rôles by means of miming and observation, without speech. That is the kind of thing we do in the lower groups. They begin in their play to imitate familiar animals, bunnies, pussies, dogs, bears, and so forth.

Prod. But all children do that to some extent.

Dir. Yes. But we encourage their first play impulses of imitation by treating them more seriously. We try to get the children absorbed in finding the way to express the unique quality and gesture that distinguishes each animal. Visits of pets to the school and trips by the children to the Zoo play an important part in these dramatic games. They are play, but to us they are also serious, as the foundation for their future dramatic work.

I hope some day you may see one of the younger groups playing at being animals. Sometimes the shy playfulness of a tumbling kitten, or the rhythmic thud of a lumbering elephant, or the flying leap of an escaping rabbit crosses their classroom floor. These fragmentary animal plays, crude though they be, soon grow into complete pantomimes of their favorite animal folk-tales. They spring to life in wordless action, until all at once the necessity of further expression produces a grunt or growl, or a triumphant phrase at the grand climax of a play.

Prod. That's good! I say that, I suppose, because it fits in with my theory that pure miming should be the only way of expressing action until a sense of absolute necessity forces words into the scene. Of course, pantomime carried beyond a certain fairly simple phase becomes too subtle and sophisticated for children.

Dir. Gordon Craig once told me, years ago, how he longed to produce a Shakespearean play that way, *Macbeth*, I think, entirely in pantomime, until the very climax of the action forced articulation in words.

Prod. The reason we lack actors, and most particularly genuine pantomime, is the loss of the old tradition, the recognition that neither voice nor facial expression alone creates a rôle, but that without the perfect training and control of the entire body there can be no complete ex-

pression of a part. And there's no escape from the fact, as I see it, that dramatic training must depend on a fundamental co-ordination and control of the body.

Dir. Yes, that's the point. But it's not to be attained by the exaggerated self-expression of aesthetic dancing. There is something fallacious in the encouragement of personal expression of emotion in children long before they have attained states of personal feeling that impel this emotion.

A training for true co-ordination through an acrobatic technique would seem a far sounder and healthier basis of bodily development; it would certainly fall in line with the genuine tradition of the lost art of pantomime, where every actor was a perfect acrobat. But it's not easy to hold children to the use of pantomime instead of the spoken word.

Prod. Why is that? Because there is so little genuine pantomime nowadays, to suggest or stimulate the impulse?

Dir. Partly. But what interferes more fundamentally with its use in the school is the dependence of our entire system of education on the written and printed word. There are so many books on every subject, you see, that it is always less effort to depend on them than to do all the hard work yourself. You probably don't know how many juvenile books are now published in the form of plays.

Prod. Are they all bad?

Dir. Not all, by any means. Some are based on good material. But the mistake, from my point of view, is to place books of plays in the hands of any children. They should, I believe, always work up the subject matter of a play for themselves, even if the source material comes out of folk tale or history. Dependence on written dialogue is, to my mind, death to the development of a genuine

production among children. For improvisation seems to be the sure foundation of a living dramatic form. The moment children focus their attention on the set speeches of dialogue, they let the other elements of their acting slip. They forget the appropriate gesture and count on the meaning of the words to carry the weight of the entire action.

Prod. You're describing just the trouble with our professional actors nowadays. They have absolutely no sense of bodily control and movement as the groundwork of their art. They really believe it's possible to act with voice and face alone.

Dir. In the early days of the school I had an interesting experience in testing the relative value of improvisation versus set dialogue with a group of nine-year-old children. I had come to realize that it was easier to break down the inhibitions upon creative expression in those arts that were less social than that of the theater. But in producing plays, not only the individual but the entire group must work to gain a sense of living and creating in a form shared together. It was this effort to attain a fluid and flexible form for dramatic development, in their earliest dramatic attempts, that brought me up against the inhibiting and limiting effect of set speeches. It was thus that pantomime became for me the obvious medium for children's plays, and improvisation the next step toward the completion of a spontaneous and original dramatic form.

Prod. But you realized you were building on the great tradition, that you were going back to the undying source in the *commedia dell' arte?*

Dir. No. Fifteen years ago I knew nothing of the early Italian comedy. It was only later, when Jacques Copeau, delighted with these children's improvisations, first com-

pared it to the methods of the *commedia dell' arte*, that I began to see that I had rediscovered, in a crude and fumbling way, those fundamentals of dramatic art.

But as I was beginning to tell you, a group of children once tried out for themselves the respective values of improvisation and set dialogue in the following way. The majority of the class had been in the school several years and had been working with me along the lines I've just described. Two new girls, conditioned by public-school methods, entered the group and brought with them the habit of giving plays from printed books. With an air of worldly experience and sophistication, they patronized a class which merely made up plays in childish phrases of their own. The upshot of this invasion was the demand of the group for printed plays. So the class teacher and I drew back for the time being and observed the attempt of these two new girls to run the class plays. At first the children got a great kick out of the feeling of doing plays the way grown-ups did them, from a printed script. But beneath the monotonous repetition the glamour of studying their parts was soon lost. And our own boys and girls who had begun to come alive in their pantomime and improvisation felt these new productions go dead on their hands. Even the two public-school girls began, as constant criticism was leveled at their dull productions by the entire class, to admit that perhaps there was something interesting, after all, added to a school play by making up the speeches as they went along.

Prod. So improvisation and pantomime won the day on their merits! That's more than can be said for our regular theater.

But how do you lead your children on to a sense of the practical conditions of production? The limitations imposed on a play by its relation to an audience? How do

you make them gradually conscious of a play as existing for others and not just for themselves? And how do you get them to realize why and how a play moves in a form that is different from a regular story? For surely there is considerable sophistication and experience in the creation of a compact and effective play, even if it be as simple and naïve, in some ways, as the immigrant play that I just witnessed.

Dir. You've just raised some of the most interesting problems that we have to deal with in training children to improvise.

We begin by spending a good deal of time in a class discussion of the material, whatever it happens to be, whether a traditional story or an original theme that they have decided to dramatize. Given the general idea for the play, discussion of its possibilities is thrown open to the class. And the main ideas for the ground-plan of the play, as they are sifted out and agreed on by the group, are then set down in a rough descriptive form. During this formative period of a play, the teacher's part is very important. For often fresh and original suggestions are made which an alert and creative teacher may be able to value more truly than the mass of the class. And just as she can often lead the group to reconsider a positive suggestion that they might have set aside, she can also steer them away from repetition of their old plots and stereotyped scenes and give them the courage to experiment freely for themselves. We all tend to drop back so regularly into old grooves that it is particularly necessary to help the children break away from the repetitions of our empty theatrical forms. And the older they grow and the more they see of our professional theater, the less interesting and more imitative do their plays become.

Teachers are also open to the suggestions of our com-

mercial stage. Often I have seen them break up the desirable simplicity and naïveté of a childlike production by injecting some of our own silly stage conventions.

It's quite distressing to note how swiftly the children are poisoned by their visits to real theaters. Every sort of theatrical trick, movie slapstick and musical comedy stunt begins to crop up at inappropriate moments. At such times all the skill and understanding of the teacher is needed to redirect the children's interest to their original play, expressed in their own terms and not those of Broadway.

Prod. But as you or one of your teachers start work on a new play with a group, how do you stimulate the development beyond its original layout?

Dir. Well, in order to get the original plot worked into its final subdivisions, whether they are ultimately called scenes or acts, the outstanding episodes must be agreed on. Again the teacher, by leading questions, can help focus the contending forces in a group. And if she sees that an episode which may be good narrative but bad theater is suggested, she can induce the children to put it to an immediate test, either in a pantomime or an improvisation. At such time she often gets the class to divide itself, one half to try out the play, the other to share the position of audience to the experiment with her. And incidentally this method of playing the rôle of audience to each other's rehearsals is one of the surest and most direct ways of developing in the children a critical sense as to what carries to an audience as good entertainment. What better way to make children who are busy trying out an episode conscious of their scenic problems than to have their own classmates call out that the page who turns his back to them (the audience), can't be heard when he talks to the king? Then comes a definite opening for the teacher who knows her job. She uses such a moment to introduce allied problems of posi-

tion, movement, interaction of individuals and groups, in this and other scenes. Similarly, when different boys and girls take turns at trying out the various rôles in a play, it is the teacher's responsibility to draw the children who sit with her into the active position of an interested but critical audience to the production they are witnessing. In such performances, then, you see, the rôle of the children as audience is as active as when they are playing parts. And the giving of such a play involves, as you saw today, not only the making of the play itself, but of the sets and costumes that go with it.

Prod. And how do you go about the making of the stage sets, costumes, and other properties?

Dir. Naturally, in a school of this type, when a play is planned all the special departments of shop, arts and crafts, dancing, and music co-operate as needed in the creation of the ensemble. But it is very important, at the point where a group are attempting to arrange their material in dramatic form, to train them to think and feel about their production as a whole. That is, to take as an example that inmigrant play you've just seen: When the children were working on the episodes of the peasants in Russia, they were encouraged to imagine not only the dialogue, but the settings and costumes, as well as the mood in which the scene was to be played.

Prod. That's not an easy or simple thing to achieve even with a group of adults.

Dir. No. With our overintellectual education, children as well as adults tend to isolate problems and consider them sequentially; first, the setting of the play in time and place; then the scenes in terms of the dialogue; then the dress that the characters shall wear. Or possibly the order in which they consider these matters varies slightly. But at any rate, they are not ordinarily considered as a single

unit, envisaged simultaneously in a single effort of constructive imagination. And here indeed comes a great educative opportunity for the teacher who is able to evoke an imaginative attitude toward the possibilities of such a production. For this potential power of conscious visualization and projection of scenes, as well as possible training in the conscious portrayal of rôles in pantomime, would tap sources of individual development that are latent in all of us.

Prod. Did I understand you correctly when you said that you thought children should be trained consciously to do several things at one and the same time, even if they are all new to them?

Dir. Yes. I wondered whether you would pick me up on that. It is, of course, quite contrary to all accepted theories of pedagogy. "Concentrate thoroughly," say the pedants, "on one thing at a time, until you can do it perfectly." But I meant what I said. The added effort of attempting to do several things simultaneously is amazing in its educative effect. And incidentally, in this particular case, it improves the production as well as the children. But, of course, as I have observed again and again, this method depends for its development on a teacher who is conscious of its vast possibilities.

Prod. But it seems to me as though you ought really to have much more time than is available in an ordinary school program for so fundamental a scheme.

Dir. That's perfectly true. And since I feel in you a response so deep and sincere, I'll tell you how I've come to regard the relation of these productions to what may yet be done with the education of the future. Personally I've always sensed that the essence of life manifests in the form of pure and intense drama. I have always understood it as a dramatic opposition of forces and temperaments,

and ourselves as actors of rather limited rôles. Suppose, then, that this marvelous power, which all children possess, to play and pretend, were for once taken seriously as the groundwork of education. Suppose, when a youngster caricatured his grandmother or mimicked his teacher, he were not instantly reproved or denounced as a wicked child; but imagine us as respecting the ever-ready impulse in children to seize upon the grotesque and the ridiculous in their elders as a fundamental asset to every child in acquiring further power to act and play rôles. In short, I suggest that we might possibly build up a more complete and thorough method of educating our children in the future by placing drama in its widest sense as the very foundation of a system.

Prod. That's an exciting idea.

Dir. But what I'm imagining would lead not alone to a different focus of the now latent potentialities of youth, but it would ultimately include, in fresh guise, all those interests that now come under the title of education.

Prod. (*smiling*). I didn't assume that you meant you would abolish the teaching of reading and mathematics from the schools forever.

Dir. No. They would simply fall into a less important place, as some of the necessary instruments of expression and intercourse in life. They would be drawn into service, just like every other possible subject that could be of the least use in the life of such a plan. Many people would smile at this suggestion of mine and say, "Oh, yes, you are simply projecting the play-school idea a step further." But that's not what I'm after. It would mean work, hard work, all around. But it might be based on elements more essential in our own natures than are those now reached by current methods of education. After all you've seen and discussed with me today, I'm sure you won't misunder-

stand, as many others might, what I really mean by an education based on the groundwork of drama. We would have nothing to do with giving plays learned by rote in the ordinary way. But we would build up our productions on a deep study of the nature and potentiality of the children concerned. And the object of this new type of drama-school would not be the ultimate productions as ends in themselves, but the deeper individual self-knowledge and general understanding of others.

Prod. How then would you set about developing this? Certainly nothing else could be quite as important. And there's no doubt that the education we now have is far from bringing it about.

Dir. Our present education leaves us in a state of ignorance about ourselves and others that is simply colossal. And society as expressed in our present type of education is in conspiracy to make us slaves to our own peculiarities. The world calls these tendencies gifts or talents. But have you ever stopped to realize that specialization is really a lopsided development of an individual? And the real job of education ought to be to develop what is still buried or less evolved in our natures.

Prod. What part of us do you regard as buried?

Dir. Oh, about 90 per cent. of what we really are is pushed out of sight by the time we're seven years old! The standards of education and society force back below the surface the most living and essential parts of our natures. We all of us learn to create a mask with which to front the world and cut ourselves off from that whole self which we might have been.

Prod. Aren't you simply referring to the Freudian unconscious in which most of our real wishes about life remain misdirected and unsatisfied?

Dir. That, and more besides. You see, our ignorance of

ourselves is not only on the emotional plane, which psychoanalysis attempts to deal with. We are quite as ignorant of the workings of our mental and physical life.

Prod. I don't follow you.

Dir. Well, you're surprised at my suggesting that we're unconscious of our physical life. By that I mean the instinctive functioning of the life of this organism. Just the incessant mechanical reactions of these bodies of ours. They have all sorts of unique peculiarities of motion, gesture, tone of voice, and posture. But in our present abysmal self-ignorance, we can tell much more about the habits of any other person's body than our own.

Prod. That's true. But I had taken that for granted. We can naturally see the other fellow better than we can see ourselves.

Dir. What an admission of failure that implies! And how useless such information must really be! At bottom, we are aware that we understand nothing unless we know ourselves. And yet we know that we understand any acquaintance better than our own self.

Prod. But how can we know ourselves in terms of the nature of our own bodies? Aren't you suggesting the impossible? Of course we can't see ourselves as others see us. That's the stupidity of such aphorisms as "People in glass houses must never throw stones." For unfortunately for us, though our houses may be glass, they can never be made of glass transparent to our glance.

Dir. Now that's just what I'm getting at. Why can't our houses, or rather ourselves, ever be transparent to our own selves? Why do we assume that our own bodies and natures must remain hidden and unknown to the one person, namely "I" or "you," who is on the most lasting and intimate terms with a given organism? Your assumption, I know, is the usual one. Just because we know so very little

of ourselves is no proof that something cannot be done to improve the situation.

Prod. And how?

Dir. Not, probably, by more of the kind of education we already have. Not by a mere uncovering of our unconscious emotional life can we penetrate to a complete basis for re-education. We can't get away from this body that each of us always has with him, and of which we know so little. To most people it would be useless to suggest what I am now telling you, that efforts to become more aware of our own gesture, movements, tone of voice, and general bodily habits, through a special training in pantomime and allied arts for the playing of rôles, might lead to a more profound self-knowledge and would therefore form a sound basis for an education of the future.

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